

East German Foreign Intelligence

Myth, reality and controversy

Edited by

**Thomas Wegener Friis,
Kristie Macrakis and
Helmut Müller-Enbergs**



Studies in Intelligence Series

East German Foreign Intelligence

This edited book examines the East German foreign intelligence service (*Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, or HVA) as a historical problem, covering politics, scientific-technical and military intelligence and counter-intelligence.

The contributors broaden the conventional view of East German foreign intelligence as driven by the inter-German conflict to include its targeting of the United States, northern European and Scandinavian countries, highlighting areas that have previously received scant attention, like scientific-technical and military intelligence. The CIA's underestimation of the HVA was a major intelligence failure. As a result, East German intelligence served as a stealth weapon against the US, West German and NATO targets, acquiring the lion's share of critical Warsaw Pact intelligence gathered during the Cold War. Themes and topics that run through the volume include the espionage wars; the HVA's relationship with the Russian KGB; successes and failures of the BND (West German Federal Intelligence Service) in East Germany; the CIA and the HVA; the HVA in countries outside of West Germany; disinformation and the role and importance of intelligence gathering in East Germany.

This book will be of much interest to students of East Germany, Intelligence Studies, Cold War History and German politics in general.

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Contents

[*List of illustrations*](#) [x](#)

[*List of contributors*](#) [xi](#)

[*Acknowledgments*](#) [xiii](#)

[**PART I Intelligence and counter-intelligence**](#) [1](#)

[**Introduction: East German foreign intelligence as history**](#)

THOMAS WEGENER FRIIS, KRISTIE MACRAKIS AND HELMUT
MÜLLER-ENBERGS [3](#)

[**1 Counter-intelligence in post-war Europe, 1945–1965**](#)

NIGEL WEST [11](#)

[**2 Western espionage and Stasi counter-espionage in East Germany, 1953–1961**](#)

PAUL MADDRELL [19](#)

[**3 The rise and fall of West German intelligence operations against East Germany**](#)

ERICH SCHMIDT-EENBOOM [34](#)

[4 Deaf, dumb, and blind: the CIA and East Germany.](#)

BENJAMIN B.FISCHER [48](#)

[5 Rosenholz: Mischa's files, CIA's booty.](#)

ROBERT GERALD LIVINGSTON [70](#)

[PART II Political intelligence 89](#)

[6 Political intelligence: foci and sources, 1969–1989](#)

HELMUT MÜLLER-ENBERGS [91](#)

[7 Active measures and disinformation as part of East Germany's propaganda war, 1953–1972](#)

MICHAEL F.SCHOLZ [113](#)

[8 Foreign intelligence under the roof of the Ministry for State Security.](#)

BERND LIPPMANN [134](#)

[9 East German espionage in Denmark](#)

THOMAS WEGENER FRIIS [146](#)

[10 How the MfS' worldview affected the intelligence cycle: a study based on operations against the Netherlands](#)

BEATRICE DE GRAAF [162](#)

PART III Scientific-technical and military intelligence 183

11 The crown jewels and the importance of scientific-technical intelligence

KRISTIE MACRAKIS 185

12 The professionalization of Soviet military intelligence and its influence on the Berlin Crisis under Khrushchev

MATTHIAS UHL 204

13 BND military espionage in East Germany, 1946–1994

ARMIN WAGNER 219

People index 238

Place index 242

Cover names and operations index 245

Illustrations

Figures

Organizational structure of the HVA, 1989 [xiv](#)

Organizational structure of the MfS, 1989 [xv](#)

9.1 SIRA reports where Denmark is mentioned [152](#)

9.2 SIRA reports on Danish exclusive political topics [153](#)

11.1 The structure of the SWT (operations unit) [186](#)

11.2 The structure of the SWT (evaluation unit) [187](#)

Table

13.1 Number of BND reports on the Air Signal Corps Barracks in Bernau, 1962–1973 [225](#)

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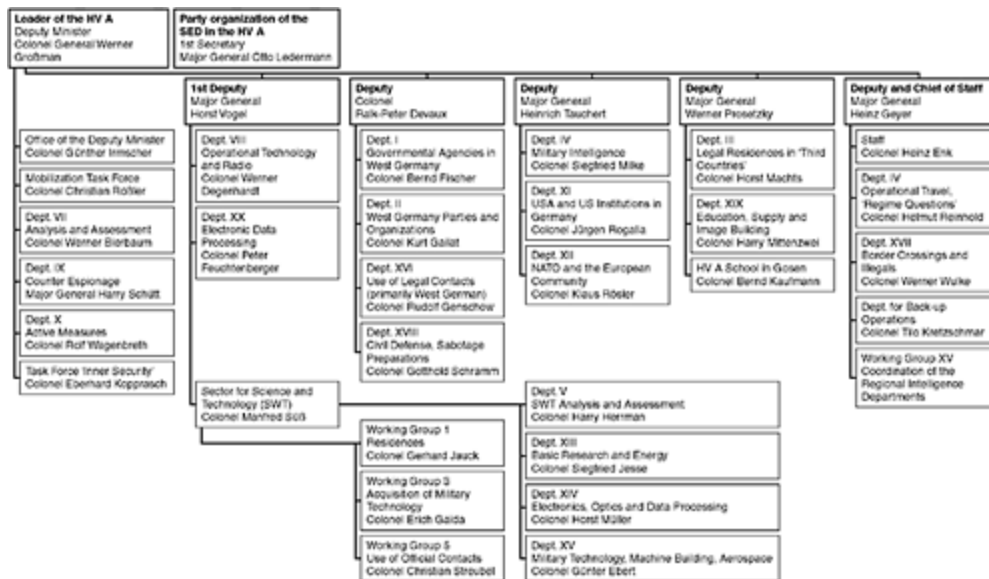


Figure 1 Organizational structure of the HVA, 1989

Part I

Intelligence and counter- intelligence

Introduction

East German foreign intelligence as history

Thomas Wegener Friis, Kristie Macrakis and Helmut Müller-Enbergs

Intelligence agencies are loath to allow scholars or journalists to view their operational files. While some intelligence agencies de-classify portions of their older material, methods and sources of work are usually exempt from such disclosure. This clearly creates a problem for intelligence history research. Discussions are often based on chance comments, intelligence failures, government-sponsored or senate or parliamentary select committee reports and public-relations information sent out by the agencies themselves.

Empirical research backed up by archival material is rarely possible. Few intelligence agencies are ready to deposit files in an archive for public use. Even when they have deposited such material, the contents have been selected by people with the same intelligence mindset that wants to block research into operational files.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, new possibilities opened up for research on the history of intelligence in Eastern Europe, in particular on the East German Ministry for State Security (MfS, or “Stasi”) and its foreign intelligence arm, the *Hauptverwaltung A* (HVA), the main directorate for intelligence.

Despite the fact the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) had a foreign intelligence agency, its activities have been overshadowed by post-Berlin Wall revelations concerning the nefarious deeds of its internal secret police in the MfS.

In recent years, widespread public attention was drawn again to the MfS with the release of the fictional, Oscar-winning film, the *Lives of Others*. This only reenforced the image of the MfS as synonymous with all-encompassing surveillance, repression and intrusion into “the lives of

others.” With 91,015 full-time employees and 189,000 agents or informers in a country with 16 million citizens, this meant that a large proportion of East Germans were involved in state security.¹ It was one of the Cold War’s largest secret police, second only to the Soviet KGB, and it has attracted most of the attention.

Unlike the United States, foreign intelligence, counter-intelligence and internal security were all under the bureaucratic roof of the MfS. This meant that the foreign intelligence unit—the HVA (modeled on the KGB’s First Directorate for Intelligence “I” and created by Soviet advisors)—was technically subordinate to the Minister for State Security, Erich Mielke.

East Germany began organized espionage against West Germany about 60 years ago. Paralleling the contours of the Cold War, a modest activity escalated into a large-scale intelligence effort against the West. Although East German intelligence made headline news in the West on account of its “failures”—the discovery of the spy couple Christel and Günter Guillaume in Chancellor Willy Brandt’s office and the defection of HVA officer Werner Stiller in 1979—it was also seen as a highly successful spy agency. The image of a highly successful spy agency was re-enforced by the mysterious spy chief, Markus Wolf, the “man without a face” because Western intelligence did not have his picture. The image-building in the media continued after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

From humble beginnings, the HVA became one of the most, if not the most, successful intelligence service, East or West, of the Cold War. But this was a post-Cold War revelation. Western intelligence often ignored it and underestimated its prowess, leaving the East Germans to serve as a kind of stealth weapon for their KGB masters. To cite just one example, German authorities estimate that Wolf’s legions, by themselves, acquired some 80 percent of all Soviet bloc intelligence on the all-important NATO target.

After the collapse of the GDR, the revealed extent of its spy activities exceeded the expectations and fears of most observers. Research from the 1990s revealed that both internal security and foreign intelligence efforts were more than double what Western intelligence officials had estimated. While pre-1989 figures estimated that the total staff at the MfS, including

the HVA, was about 22,000, the actual number was 91,015.² While officials thought the HVA had fewer than 2,000 officers at headquarters, the figure was closer to 3,299 at HVA headquarters and the GDR's 15 district offices, or 4,777 including officers on a special mission and officer-agents at headquarters.³

In addition to new figures, during the 1990s various groups—from prosecutors to journalists to historians—approached the topic from various perspectives. A plethora of new details emerged from court cases, news reporting and historical work in the archives that sometimes led to controversy.

In Germany, the debates were often highly politicized. The historian Hubertus Knabe put forth the strong thesis that East German intelligence had “overrun” or “infiltrated” West Germany with spies and could steer the course of politics and the media. Another politicized controversy surrounded the question of the MfS’ campaign to discredit West German politicians with Nazi pasts during the 1950s and 1960s.⁴

While journalists in the United States and the United Kingdom largely reproduced the German debates, several historians began to look at the history of the MfS as intelligence history.⁵ The attempt was greatly accelerated by the release of new material relating to foreign intelligence in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

In Germany, discussions about East German espionage also took place at scholarly conferences. Noteworthy was the conference sponsored by the Stasi File Authority in Berlin in 2001, where scholars, experts and practitioners from Germany and America shared their knowledge about the history and operations of the HVA. Officers from the HVA had also already organized highly publicized conferences and big public events on the topic for several years. Taking these parallel developments into consideration, the University of Southern Denmark decided to host a conference in November of 2007 bringing together former senior HVA officers and historians to examine the actual record of East German successes and failures.

Although the event took place some 20 years after the public discussion on the topic began, this step proved to be a huge one for Germany, as the conference, and the participation of the “Stasi” practitioners became highly controversial in the German press. The chapters in this volume are based on presentations by American, British, Dutch, Danish and German historians who presented the conference.

The contributions in this volume represent knowledge that can be designated as the third phase of research on East German espionage. The first phase was not historical research at all; the knowledge that emerged before the fall of the Berlin Wall was part of the espionage wars. Intelligence agencies’ knowledge about East German foreign intelligence was usually based on information from defectors and interrogations—i.e. knowledge that is hard to back up with hard empirical research in the files. Even when defectors brought files with them, those records represented a small piece of the puzzle.

The HVA was permitted to destroy most of its files before German unification on the grounds of protecting sources and methods. But a great deal of information still exists in archives that survived, as well as in court cases, memoirs and interrogation reports, all of which has enabled historians to garner a comprehensive, if not complete, overview of East German foreign intelligence, as the present volume shows.

The third research phase began in June of 2003 when the CIA allowed access to an HVA microfilmed card file. This material was dubbed “Rosenholz” (Rosewood) by West German officials and provides information about all the people documented by the East German intelligence agency.

During the second phase of research only the agent network existing in West Germany in 1988 could be catalogued. These 1,553 West Germans and West Berliners—called unofficial staff members—were catalogued by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (West German counter-intelligence) when they were allowed to take notes with pencils on the material in the United States for legal purposes (Rosenholz I). The material could not be given to researchers working at the Stasi File Authority because it was considered top secret. Researchers were only

allowed to see “Rosenholz” material after June 2003, when the CIA provided the West German government with a copy of the card files on a CD-ROM (Rosenholz II). This new material stimulated important new research, now made available for use in this volume.

Together with other material from the archives, such as the HVA information reports provided to the party leadership and the electronic database, the “System for Information and Research on Intelligence” (SIRA), historians can now recreate agent networks, intelligence foci and gathered information. Despite these great strides in releasing information, some areas remained black boxes because the CIA only returned index cards with German names. We expect a fourth research phase when the CIA returns all of the HVA card files with non-German names from countries such as America, France or Greece.

Overview of topics, themes and chapters

We have assembled an international group of scholars to examine East German foreign intelligence as a historical problem in the intelligence areas of: politics, scientific-technical and military intelligence and counter-intelligence. Themes and topics that run through the volume include the espionage wars; the relationship to the KGB; the successes and failures of the BND in East Germany and the reverse; the CIA and the HVA; the HVA in countries outside of West Germany; disinformation; and the role and importance of scientific-technical and military intelligence gathering.

In addition to showcasing the inter-German espionage conflicts on German soil, the chapters in this volume broaden the scope of East German foreign intelligence to include the United States and Northern European and Scandinavian countries like the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark as targets. We highlight areas that have received scant attention before, such as scientific-technical and military intelligence, while the central topic of counter-intelligence runs through numerous chapters in this volume.

Intelligence agencies spend a large amount of time playing the spy game with their adversaries. The five opening chapters demonstrate how the spy-vs-spy game was played out on a variety of theatrical stages, from the

overarching intelligence/counter-intelligence Cold War dialectic played out between the superpowers or their surrogates, to the inter-German spy wars on German soil, to CIA activities in East Germany itself.

Nigel West's opening chapter paints broad background strokes on post-war counter-intelligence in Europe and provides a context and framework for the subject of the MfS. Despite the KGB's mighty hold on the intelligence stage, it suffered serious blows in the 1950s. The catastrophic defections of 1954 (Yuri Rastvorov, Nikolai Khokhlov, Piotr Deriabin and the Petrovs) altered the Cold War counter-intelligence conflict permanently and allowed Western agencies to mount highly aggressive operations against individual KGB *rezidentura*. In response, the KGB altered its methodology, known as "*konspiratsia*" and adopted a strategy of strategic deception to mislead what they termed "the main adversary." Poland, Czechoslovakia and East Germany pursued a similar agenda.

While the KGB pursued its fight with major Western intelligence agencies, another spy-vs-spy war was taking place on German soil. Paul Maddrell makes the case that there was a bee-hive of counter-intelligence activity occurring in East Germany during the 1950s. For Maddrell this demonstrates that Western intelligence had placed, unsuccessfully, an enormous number of spies in East Germany. MfS counter-intelligence became very adept at catching these spies and collecting evidence against them.

Maddrell draws on the files of the MfS to examine the secret struggle between the Western secret services (the American, West German and British) and the MfS' counter-espionage service in the years between 1945 and 1961. The MfS' counter-intelligence divisions and their partner, the KGB, scored many successes in identifying and arresting Western spies in the GDR. The need to combat extensive Western spying stimulated the development of East Germany's large and busy counter-espionage service. The construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961 dramatically altered the espionage playing field; the West found it increasingly more difficult to place agents in the East because the Wall provided a built-in security net.

While Maddrell concentrates on the scene within East Germany, Erich Schmidt-Eenboom describes West Germany's intelligence activities against

its major adversary, the MfS, in East Germany. Schmidt-Eenboom argues that the general public considers intelligence against East Germany by the West German service, the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND) a failure. Yet new research suggests that they were very successful in military espionage. An analysis of human and technical intelligence gathering suggests that West Germany was less successful in political intelligence and the game of intelligence in general. After the Wall was built in 1961, the West became increasingly dependent on signals intelligence (SIGINT), while the East scored successes in human intelligence (HUMINT) by planting spies in key Western political and intelligence organizations.

Former CIA officer and chief historian Benjamin Fischer presents a hard-hitting indictment of the CIA's failures in East Germany. As the title indicates, Fischer argues that the CIA was deaf, dumb and blind in its efforts, or lack thereof, in East Germany.

The CIA's Soviet-East European Division (SE) considered the MfS to be a small and ineffective adjunct of the KGB. Only after the fall of the Berlin Wall did they learn that the MfS ran world-class intelligence, counter-intelligence and SIGINT operations.

The SE's blind spot was a major intelligence failure. The HVA served as a stealth weapon against the US, West German and NATO targets, acquiring the lion's share of critical Warsaw Pact intelligence. All of the CIA's East German sources were double agents controlled by the MfS. With this and other intelligence failures, the CIA lost the "spy war" but was able to declare victory in the Cold War.

Robert Gerald Livingston's contribution pieces together the story of how the CIA acquired the HVA's most coveted secret information—the names and cover names of its agents. Although the HVA legally destroyed most of its operational files, in 1992, the CIA purchased microfilms of the entire foreign espionage name file of the MfS' foreign intelligence department, the HVA. These index cards included the real names, cover names and operational details on all the HVA's agents, contact persons, helpers and persons of interest abroad, about 90 percent of them in West Germany. The seller appears to have been a "walk-in" to the US Embassy in Warsaw, a low-ranking archivist of the Soviet intelligence service.

Political intelligence is a major foci for all intelligence agencies, though it is often shaped by the type of social, political or economic system within which the agency operates. Political intelligence at the MfS focused primarily on West Germany and its parties, but its tentacles stretched to the whole world. Like other Eastern Bloc intelligence and security agencies, disinformation—what they called “active measures”—was a major component of their activities abroad. After a general overview of the HVA’s sources in political intelligence, this unit features two chapters focusing on active measures and disinformation. For Bernd Lippmann, foreign intelligence was shaped differently because it was under the roof of the MfS. By contrast Michael Scholz details East Germany’s massive propaganda effort against West Germany and Sweden using active measures and disinformation. The final two chapters are case studies of East German espionage in two major northern European countries—Denmark and the Netherlands. While both chapters showcase the importance of these two small countries for East German espionage, Friis sees it as normal intelligence operations with a focus on armed and political conflict, while de Graaf shows how the MfS’ “view of the enemy” shaped its intelligence activities.

Helmut Müller-Enbergs provides an overview of the HVA’s political espionage against West Germany and the United States. He describes the 75 most important cases of political espionage involving agents whose true identities remain unknown and assesses their results. He takes an in-depth look at an agent codenamed “Brest” as a case study in HVA tradecraft used against the US target and concludes that the myth of HVA success is just that, more myth than reality.

Michael Scholz examines the use of “disinformation,” for instance, the dissemination of false and misleading information through intelligence channels to mislead, confuse and deceive foreign governments and policymakers. He describes the HVA’s use of “dirty tricks,” East German-style, in Sweden and West Germany in support of East German and Soviet foreign policy. The HVA specialized in using Nazi files to discredit and blackmail West German politicians and paint the Bonn government as a successor to Hitler’s regime. Even neutral Sweden was a target of East German slander.

The HVA engaged in conventional intelligence and counter-intelligence operations, and it also, in conjunction with the KGB, practiced what the Soviets called “active measures” or covert political-psychological operations aimed at influencing policy and public opinion in West Germany, a tactic known as “perceptions management” in Western intelligence jargon. The HVA and the internal security units of the MfS both conducted operations in West Germany according to an elaborate division of labor. Bernd Lippmann makes the case that the HVA’s foreign intelligence operations and the MfS’ repressive measures were two sides of the same coin and that both acted on orders from the East German Socialist Unity Party (SED) and in coordination with the KGB as “the sword and shield” of the Party.

Denmark, with a population of only five million, would seem to be an unlikely HVA target. Given its geo-strategic location at the mouth of the Baltic Sea, its proximity to East Germany, and its NATO membership, it was high on the East Germans’ list of countries to watch. According to Soviet war plans, East German forces stood ready to invade and occupy Denmark in the event of a war with the Atlantic Alliance. The HVA began targeting its Baltic neighbor in the early 1950s and ferreted out political, industrial and military secrets there.

Beatrice de Graaf takes a functional approach to the HVA by exploring its operations in terms of the so-called “intelligence cycle.” Using information on East German activities in the Netherlands, she analyzes the role of ideology and “images of the enemy” in influencing operations at different stages of the cycle. Her chapter is a needed corrective to historians’ conventional fixation on the inner-German conflict and serves as a reminder that the East Germans took a broad approach to the intelligence war with the West.

Although political intelligence has been emphasized as the core of the HVA’s mission, new archival material demonstrates the primacy of scientific-technical and military intelligence.

To date, most studies have focused on HVA political intelligence. Kristie Macrakis reveals, however, that stealing scientific-technical intelligence and Western technology was a priority mission. After a brief discussion of the

Rosenholz files, which remain classified by the CIA but are available in Berlin, she uses them to reconstruct agent networks and examines questions like: Who were the agents? Where did they work? What motive did they have for spying? An astonishing 40 percent of all HVA agents came from Western scientific and industrial institutions, a fact that Western counter-intelligence either ignored for political reasons or did not recognize.

The last two chapters take a different perspective in two case studies, one dealing with Soviet military intelligence (GRU) operations during the second Berlin Crisis of 1961–1962 and the other with efforts by the West German intelligence agency (BND) to collect intelligence on Soviet forces stationed in the GDR.

Matthias Uhl draws on newly released documents from the GRU to examine how military intelligence developed analysis and situation reports during the second Berlin Crisis, and the extent to which they were used in political decision making. This material demonstrates that Soviet military intelligence underwent further professionalization under Khrushchev, even if this was not directly tied to political decision making.

Most political and historical commentary on East German intelligence focuses on HVA and MfS espionage in West Germany. For more than 40 years, however, the BND targeted the massive Soviet military presence, known as the Soviet Group of Forces, Germany, in the GDR, compiling order-of-battle and indications-and-warning of war intelligence. Armin Wagner analyzes the scale, strategies, outcome and limits of West German HUMINT and SIGINT operations behind this sector of the Iron Curtain. He discusses intelligence sharing and liaison operations within NATO and the role of East German military intelligence during the Cold War. This chapter draws on both recently declassified BND records, as well as those of the former MfS.

Notes

1 Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit. Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt, 1950–1989/90*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2000, pp. 551–557. For the new number of unofficial staff members, see the

statistics in: Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit, Teil 3: Statistik*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2008, pp. 40 and 216.

2 Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter*. See also Jens Gieseke, *Das MielkeKonzern: Die Geschichte der Stasi, 1945–1990*, München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2006, for a general overview.

3 The BStU provides the broken down statistics in a table: Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit, Teil 2: Anleitung für die Arbeit mit Agenten, Kundschaftern und Spionen in der Bundesrepublik*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1998, p. 38. Peter Siebenmorgen, *Staatssicherheit der DDR: Der Westen im Fadenkreuz der Stasi*, Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1993, pp. 114–115 uses the total figure of 5,068 at headquarters and district offices.

4 Hubertus Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik: Stasi im Westen*, München: Propyläen, 1999; Henry Leide, *NS-Verbrecher und Staatssicherheit: die geheime Vergangenheitspolitik der DDR*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007.

5 See Anthony Glees, *The Stasi Files: East Germany's Secret Operations against Britain*, London: Free Press, 2003; Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008; Paul Maddrell, "The Western Secret Services, the East German Ministry of State Security and the Building of the Berlin Wall," *Intelligence and National Security*, 21:5 (2006), pp. 829–847; Paul Maddrell, "The Scientist Who Came in from the Cold: Heinz Barwich's Flight from the GDR," *Intelligence and National Security*, 20:4 (2005), pp. 608–630. For recent synthetic works in English, see also Mike Dennis, *The Stasi: Myth and Reality*, London: Longman, 2003; John Schmeidel, *Stasi: Sword and Shield of the Party*, London: Routledge, 2004.

1

Counter-intelligence in post-war Europe, 1945–1965

Nigel West

The post-war counter-intelligence scene in Europe consisted of two quite separate environments—one Allied, the other Soviet—with the opening salvoes of the Cold War fought overtly in the quadripartite cities of Berlin and Vienna, and a more clandestine conflict developing in most of the major capitals of the world where diplomatic premises accommodated intelligence personnel.

On the Allied side, British, American, French, Swiss and Belgian agencies were preoccupied with picking over the evidence recovered from Nazi archives concerning wartime investigations into Soviet espionage conducted across Europe. Much of this effort was concentrated on the *Sicherheitsdienst* records retrieved from Brussels, which documented the huge operation conducted against the Rote Kapelle,¹ and the study of one particularly important cache, seized in Paris by the Gestapo, which would become known as the ‘Robinson Papers’,² would preoccupy MI5 and the CIA for many years.

Evidence from the first post-war Soviet defector, the GRU cipher clerk, Igor Gouzenko, in Ottawa in September 1945, consisted of his personal testimony supported by 109 purloined papers he had removed from the embassy *referentura*.³ This evidence proved the existence of a continuing Soviet espionage offensive, high-level penetration of Western atomic research facilities and a strong North American link to the Rote Kapelle. Survivors of the network may have been dispersed across the world, but their commitment to Moscow remained undiminished, and clearly they had maintained contact with their local *rezidenturas*. Proof of this was provided by Rachel Duebendorfer, already implicated in the Rote Kapelle in wartime Switzerland, who appeared in Gouzenko’s material as a continuing and active source for the GRU. Also incriminated was an American scientist,

Arthur G. Steinberg,⁴ who had returned to the United States in 1944 to work on a classified naval project. Pursuit of Gouzenko's other leads would result in the conviction of the first post-war atomic spy, Dr. Allan Nunn May, who was arrested in London in 1946, having returned from Canada, and the identification of other suspects in the United States, France and Switzerland.

For Allied counter-intelligence agencies, the Rote Kapelle provided the basic matrix on which additional data could be overlaid, and that information consisted of three distinct sources. First, there was the continuing, dynamic series of leads offered by what the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) termed Source 5, which originated in the VENONA⁵ program conducted jointly by British and American cryptographers. Although the intercepts would dry up in 1949 when the Soviets belatedly improved their cipher security, work on the product would continue until 1979, with a dramatic boost offered in 1964 by the donation of a collection of unsolved encrypted wartime texts from the Swedish codebreakers at the Forsvarets Radioanstalt. From the outset VENONA provided eloquent proof of a continuing Soviet espionage offensive, high-level penetration of the British, French and American intelligence establishment and a Soviet concentration on Western atomic research.

Second, the Allies had in their possession allegations made by defectors, even if their full value was not necessarily appreciated at the time. Walter Krivitsky⁶ had abandoned the GRU in September 1937 and had provided both the French and the British with lengthy interviews. Although the French records ended up on the bottom of the River Seine in May 1940, Krivitsky's debriefing in London in January 1940 would come to be recognized as a valuable set of clues, known within the counter-intelligence community as 'serials', indicating hostile penetration in Holland, France and Britain. Krivitsky's mysterious death in Washington DC in February 1941 effectively terminated his further utility, but his testimony, already validated in 1939 by the confession and conviction of the British Foreign Office cipher clerk, John King, demonstrated the value of his information, which would enjoy a continued relevance for many years. One of those he identified as a Soviet spy was Henri Pieck,⁷ who would survive a Nazi

concentration camp to supply valuable information to the Dutch and British security services.

There was also a second knowledgeable pre-war Soviet intelligence defector hiding in the United States as a fugitive, although Alexander Orlov⁸ would not become available as a source until after he had emerged from hiding in 1953. Even if Orlov concealed details of his own career, his role as the NKVD *rezident* in Barcelona during the Spanish Civil War confirmed that numerous agents had undergone Soviet espionage training under his supervision. Evidence of this would emerge over many years, including the London cases of Oliver Green in 1940 and Morris Cohen's arrest in 1961. Both men had been recruited while serving with the International Brigade and had remained loyal to the cause.

In March 1947 another veteran of the International Brigade, Allan Foot,⁹ who had been part of the GRU's Rote Drei in Switzerland during the war, defected to the British in Berlin while traveling to a new assignment as an illegal in the United States. He underwent a long debriefing in which he identified all the other members of the network that he had encountered. This information was passed on to the Swiss *Bundespolizei*, a late participant in the Allied counter-intelligence community.

The third distinct resource available to Western molehunters immediately following the war was the evidence offered by three linked Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) defectors, Louis Budenz, Whittaker Chambers¹⁰ and Elizabeth Bentley,¹¹ who separately supplied the FBI with overlapping evidence of the NKVD's pre-war and wartime dependence on CPUSA sources, and incriminated numerous suspects. While an attempt to run Bentley against her NKVD controller in New York failed, her memory not only proved reliable, but 25 of those named as spies would be corroborated by VENONA. Altogether, she was responsible for the initiation of 82 FBI counter-espionage investigations. In addition, two further sources provided the FBI with useful background information. Boris Morros¹² was run as a double agent against the NKVD, and Hede Massing,¹³ a former Soviet spy from Austria, filled in many gaps in the FBI's knowledge of operations conducted by her late husband, Gerhardt Eisler, and other Soviet illegals.

Alerted by Igor Gouzenko and a letter received the same month from a would-be defector, Konstantin Volkov, British counter-intelligence embarked on a painful pursuit of potential moles. This would last for a further three decades. The relevant paragraph of Volkov's offer included

duplicates or photocopies which were given to us by NKGB agents who are employees of the British intelligence organs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain. Judging by the cryptonyms there are nine such agents in London. This list is of extreme importance since it gives opportunities to establish the NKGB agents in the most important institutions. It is known to me, for example, that one of the NKGB agents fulfills the duties of the chief of a department of the English counter-intelligence Directorate in London. Another works in the apparatus of the British consulate in Istanbul.¹⁴

En route, Kim Philby, Guy Burgess and Anthony Blunt would be identified as spies who had worked in various branches of British intelligence. and All three, at various moments, had been run by Soviet personnel based in Paris.

From the Soviet perspective, the defections of 1945 amounted to self-inflicted wounds that might have been avoided, and fortunately would not be exploited with much skill, so timely counter-measures could be taken because of continuing access to details of the resulting molehunts. Warnings had been issued to place sources 'on ice' following the damaging disclosures made almost simultaneously by Gouzenko and Bentley. Kim Philby had intervened to eliminate Volkov before he could make good on his offer to compromise nine spies active in Britain. Dispatched to Istanbul to receive Volkov, Philby arrived too late and reported that the Soviet was last seen being bundled aboard an unscheduled Soviet aircraft bound for Moscow.¹⁵

VENONA remained a continuing threat, about which no effective neutralizing action could be taken other than alerting those incriminated to the potential threat. While a warning intended for the physicist Klaus Fuchs in September 1949 failed to reach him in time, Donald Maclean was saved from arrest in May 1951 by his timely exfiltration, even if the

circumstances of his escape served to contaminate some of his co-conspirators.

Even after 1949, when the Soviets became fully aware of the VENONA threat, having been alerted first by William Weisband and then by Kim Philby, the source continued to offer an insight into Soviet activities in France, Britain and Sweden, and to a lesser extent in Prague, Sofia, Ankara, Berlin and The Hague.

In addition to the 1945 crisis and the Damocles' sword of VENONA, the Kremlin suffered a devastating setback in 1954 with the almost simultaneous defections of Yuri Rastvorov in Japan, Piotr Deriabin¹⁶ in Vienna, Nikolai Khokhlov¹⁷ in Frankfurt and Evdokia and Vladimir Petrov¹⁸ in Canberra. Separately, these five experienced NKVD officers hemorrhaged their inside knowledge of Soviet operations on a hitherto unprecedented scale and prompted a dramatic restructuring of Soviet counter-intelligence, placing an emphasis on the deployment of Second Chief Directorate (SCD) Soviet colony (SK) specialists to most of the overseas *rezidenturas*. With so many of their own techniques, personnel and covers utterly compromised, the NKVD could do little else, apart from replace the Chairman, Sergei Kruglov, with Ivan Serov.

The impact of these five defections—unconnected but almost sequential—was a serious blow to the NKVD, not least because of the coordinated way in which the west handled them. Three of the officers ended up in the hands of the CIA, while the Petrovs were granted asylum by the Australian Security Intelligence Organization,¹⁹ which shared both access and the resulting intelligence product with all its allies. Thus the Soviets found that the consequences of each individual defection could not be isolated and perhaps managed, as would be the methodology applied to a single incident. Instead there was immediate evidence—through reported approaches to personnel and increased accurately targeted surveillance across the globe—of a choreographed exploitation of what the defectors had told their debriefers. Based on the measurable reactions, information disclosed in Australia and Japan could be felt in London and Ottawa.

The creation of the Committee of Information (KI), which effectively had combined the resources of the NKVD and the GRU to concentrate on the prevention of further defections, mitigated the 1954 losses by taking the appropriate counter-measures and mounting a coordinated attack on their adversaries with the objective of recruiting sources in the highest echelons of the American, British, German, French, Norwegian and NATO security and intelligence structures.

The change in Soviet strategy, as advocated by the KGB Chairman Aleksandr Shelepin in 1959, placed a priority on the recruitment of new sources and the protection of existing moles within the relevant agencies, and the evidence suggests that the application of very considerable Soviet resources in these critical areas bore impressive fruit. The counter-intelligence tactics adopted included the targeting of vulnerable Western personnel based in Moscow and the development of aggressive schemes intended to reveal the identities of their professional opponents. In terms of the identification of moles, senior long-term spies were caught in Paris (George Paques), Bonn (Heinz Felfe and Hans Clemens), London (George Blake) and Oslo (Ingeborg Lygren). Those who fell victim to SCD-inspired entrapments in Moscow included British (Geoffrey Harrison), Canadian (John Watkins) and French (Maurice Dejean) ambassadors, a cipher clerk (Roy Rhodes), defense attaché staff (John Vassall, Gunvor Haavik, Louis Guibaud), politician (Anthony Courtney), intelligence officer (Richard Ellis Smith) and numerous diplomats. Similar ensnarements were conducted in Prague (Edward Scott and John Stonehouse) and Warsaw (Harry Houghton and Irwin Scarbeck). As for Germany, Markus Wolf's HVA virtually rewrote the textbook on stratagems designed to compromise the susceptible. Although the HVA made only a limited contribution further afield, apart from Nicaragua and Madagascar, it proved extremely successful in penetrating its political and intelligence targets in the Federal Republic, infiltrating the Chancellor's office, the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* and the BfV.

Although the KGB rarely shared information with its subordinate Warsaw Pact satellite agencies, it adopted a policy of allowing—particularly—the Czech StB and the Polish UB to cultivate sources, but taking over their handling once they had been recruited and returned to their native countries.

This became evidence in the Houghton case in 1961 when a British embassy clerk in Warsaw was passed over to the KGB to be managed in London. Similarly, two StB defectors in 1968 revealed that their overseas candidates for recruitment had to be cleared through the local KGB *rezidentura* for Moscow's approval.

In contrast to their Polish, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romanian and Czech colleagues, the HVA enjoyed a large measure of autonomy, perhaps because of Wolf's undoubted skill at engendering loyalty—thus limiting HVA defections—and his unsurpassed record of running successful long-term penetrations against mainly, but not exclusively, Federal German institutions.

The astonishing results achieved by the KGB in such a short time after the catastrophic losses of 1954 suggest that the organization's reaction had proved effective. An early clue was to be found in April 1954 when a minister's son, Feliks Krutikov, who had been negotiating his defection with the British and French in Paris, was unexpectedly recalled to Moscow. Working under trade cover, Krutikov had only just begun to pass information when clearly he had been betrayed, for he was arrested as soon as he landed in Moscow. Similarly, a GRU illegal, Colonel Mikhail Fedorov, vanished in September 1958, just eight months after he had volunteered his services to the CIA in Paris. In October 1960 a Polish illegal, Wladislaw Mroz, was found murdered in Paris. Such events are *prima facie* evidence of hostile penetration, for if a potential defector cannot safely make contact to discuss defection, it follows that there has been a leak.

In strategic terms, the Soviet counter-intelligence games served the Kremlin's long-term interests and provided a direct benefit in the Ukraine, Poland and the Baltic states. Western operations over the border from Turkey in the late 1940s, intended to infiltrate Ukrainian nationalists into Soviet territory, were undermined by Kim Philby, who headed the SIS station in Istanbul between 1947 and 1949, and was therefore in a key position to sabotage Operation CLIMBER. Similarly, KGB double agents wrecked the insertion of agents into Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and until the defection of Josef Swiatlo in December 1953, the CIA in Frankfurt had

financed WIN, supposedly an anti-communist network in Poland. Swiatlo revealed that WIN actually was a massive deception masterminded by the UB with Soviet guidance. Embarrassed, the CIA closed their end of the organization, leaving the UB to exploit the outcome for a propaganda advantage. With what amounted to an Anglo-American withdrawal from operations in eastern Europe, the KGB was able to consolidate the Soviet grip, and even tightened its hold on Finland, where a KGB agent, Urho Kekkonen, was elected as president in February 1956. One of Kekkonen's first acts was to establish his own security agency, headed by another KGB agent, Professor Vilkuna, formerly Finland's chief censor.

In the decade following the debacle of the 1954 defections the KGB completely reversed the imbalance, suffering only minimal defections. Two KGB illegals, Reino Hayhanen and Kaarlo Tuomi, defected to the FBI in May 1957 and March 1959, respectively, but their disclosures were limited to KGB operations in North America, where the illegal *rezident* in New York, Rudolf Abel, was compromised and arrested. It is a measure of KGB tradecraft and *konspiratsia*, and the *rezident*'s own impressive discipline, that it would be years before Abel could be identified as Willie Fischer,^{[20](#)} a veteran KGB officer born in England. By the time his true identity was established, he had been exchanged in a spy-swap in February 1962 and returned to Moscow.

The next KGB officer to switch sides, apart from Aleksandr Kaznacheev,^{[21](#)} a regular diplomat co-opted in Rangoon in March 1959, was Bogdan Stashinsky in Berlin in 1961, a 13th Department assassin who did no lasting damage to the organization. He was followed at the end of the year by Anatoli Golitsyn,^{[22](#)} who was granted political asylum in the United States when he surrendered to the CIA station chief in Helsinki.

One of Deriabin's former colleagues in Vienna, Golitsyn had enjoyed a varied experience in the KGB, which he joined in 1947, and he disclosed information that would eventually compromise spies in London (John Vassall), Paris (George Paques) and Ottawa (Hugh Hambleton). However, his real value was his counter-intelligence knowledge, which eloquently exposed the KGB's restructuring following the 1954 losses. According to Golitsyn, the KGB had adopted an aggressive policy of concentrating on

the recruitment of Allied intelligence professionals and cipher personnel, abandoning the passive posture that characterized the period of Lavrenti Beria's control over the Lubyanka. Although he relied heavily on second-hand gossip from his contemporaries, he provided tantalizing clues to penetration of the CIA, British intelligence and SDECE, in which an entire network, codenamed SAPPHIRES, had flourished. Uniquely, this latter allegation became the foundation for Leon Uris' best-selling novel, *Topaz*.²³

Golitsyn offered detailed explanations for some of the operational setbacks suffered in recent years, such as the unexpected withdrawal of Feliks Krutikov and the disappearance of Mikhail Fedorov, but his message of wholesale hostile penetration was unwelcome. Of course, the exfiltration of Kim Philby from Beirut in January 1963 demonstrated the scale of the problem, for in a partial confession made before he fled to Moscow he acknowledged having compromised Konstantin Volkov, and the entire CLIMBER program, and much else besides.

Golitsyn's almost apocalyptic analysis of the Kremlin's deception strategy made uncomfortable reading, but ultimately, in 1967, an inter-Allied counter-intelligence forum, codenamed CAZAB, was empaneled to assess the implications. Golitsyn asserted that false defectors had been employed to misinform Western intelligence agencies, and denounced Yuri Krotkov, who defected in London in September 1963, as a classic example. Although Krotkov was not a KGB officer, he had participated in several Second Chief Directorate honeytraps in Moscow and had helped ensnare the French ambassador, Maurice Dejean, among several others. Golitsyn also expressed skepticism about the credentials of Yuri Nosenko,²⁴ a self-proclaimed SCD major who would defect to the CIA in Geneva in April 1964.

The concept of the dispatched-defector was entirely novel, was not accepted fully by many and remains controversial. Nevertheless, Nosenko was incarcerated by the CIA until April 1967, under the attorney-general's authority, in an attempt to establish his bona-fides. Ultimately he was released, his true loyalty a matter of continuing speculation. He died in 2008, still a CIA consultant.

In the years that followed, Golitsyn's interpretation of the West's counter-intelligence experience made him few friends, and he would challenge some long-treasured assumptions by casting doubt over some cases held as great triumphs, such as the authenticity of Oleg Penkovsky,²⁵ the GRU officer who had supplied the West with details of Soviet missile capabilities in the months leading up to the Cuban missile crisis of October 1962. According to Golitsyn, Penkovsky's motives were suspect, and he made a compelling argument for suggesting that he too had been a dispatched agent, working throughout under KGB control. As so many CIA and SIS careers had been built on this single coup, Golitsyn's message was far from popular, even among counter-intelligence staff trained to exercise objectivity and skepticism.

In retrospect, the post-war counter-intelligence scene was dominated by the 1954 Soviet defections and the KGB's subsequent recovery to the point that it succeeded in penetrating every major Western target. Eventually, long-term moles would be uncovered in the French, German, British, Norwegian and American intelligence agencies, eloquent proof of the KGB's ability to reassert itself and of its capacity to mount imaginative operations against its equally professional adversaries.

Notes

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3 Igor Gouzenko, *This Was My Choice*, London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1948.

4 Arthur G. Steinberg is referred to in the *Royal Commission Report*, Ottawa, 1946.

5 R.L. Benson and M. Warner, *VENONA: Soviet Espionage and the American Response 1939–1957*, Washington, DC: National Security

Agency, 1996.

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20 Vincent Arthey, *Like Father Like Son*, London: St Ermin's Press, 2005.

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23 Leon Uris, *Topaz*, London: William Kimber, 1968.

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2

Western espionage and Stasi counter-espionage in East Germany, 1953–1961

Paul Maddrell

Introduction

This chapter examines the secret struggle between the Western secret services and the counter-espionage service of the East German Ministry of State Security (*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*, MfS or Stasi) in the years 1953–1961. Little is known about this subject. The years 1945–1961 constitute a distinct era in the history of espionage in Germany; I examine the years 1953–1961 because my sources enable me to. The Western secret services examined are those of the United States, West Germany and Britain. For the United States, the services concerned are the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the US Army's intelligence agencies—the Counter-Intelligence Corps (CIC) and the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). For Britain, the service is the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). For West Germany, the services are the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (Federal Intelligence Service, BND, which is responsible for foreign intelligence collection) and the *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, BfV, which is responsible for domestic security).

This chapter is based on the records of one division of the MfS: *Hauptabteilung IX* (Main Department IX, or HAIX). It was the Stasi's investigation department (*Untersuchungsorgan*). It investigated cases of suspected political crime and prepared them for prosecution. One of these crimes was espionage; so one of its tasks was to interrogate arrested spies.¹ This gave it a good understanding of the operations and objectives of the Western secret services. It also received information on Western espionage from the various elements of the Stasi's counter-espionage service. Naturally, its archive for the 1950s and 1960s gives a fascinating insight into Western espionage, as well as the Stasi's counter-espionage practice.

The chapter explains how I obtained these records. It then demonstrates that HAIX did a good job and that its records on Western spying are reliable. Using the evidence they provide, the chapter then turns to considering the character and success of the Western secret services' spying, referring to the contrast between their success in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and their failure in the Soviet Union. It shows that although the KGB was successful in the Soviet Union itself in defeating and preventing Western espionage, the GDR's open border with West Germany made it much more vulnerable. The inner-German border was only fully closed in August 1961, when the border between the Soviet and Western sectors of Berlin was sealed. Strong anti-Communism among East Germans was a further factor favouring energetic Western spying and subversion. The Western secret services' espionage encouraged the development within the Stasi of a large and busy counter-espionage service. The construction of the Berlin Wall increased the GDR's security against spying and ended the most successful period of Western spying in East Germany; the period that came after was much less successful. Indeed, on current evidence, that 16-year period was the most successful period of Western spying in any territory under the control of the Soviet Union and its security service. Despite the loss of huge numbers of agents through arrest, very large networks were run successfully and an immense amount of valuable intelligence was collected. This intelligence supported Western policies towards the GDR and the Bloc.

My road to the BStU and its records on Western espionage

In 1998 I finished a PhD thesis at Cambridge University, entitled 'Britain's Exploitation of Occupied Germany for Scientific and Technical Intelligence on the Soviet Union'. The thesis was largely based on the records of the Scientific and Technical Intelligence Branch (STIB), a small unit of interrogators that worked for Intelligence Division, Control Commission for Germany (British Element), the intelligence service of the British administration of northwest Germany during its occupation after the Second World War.² STIB was created in 1946 and renamed the Overseas Liaison Branch when the Federal Republic gained its sovereignty in 1955. It was dissolved in 1958. Its job was to gather intelligence on scientific research and development, weaponry and technology relevant to war from sources with knowledge of East Germany, the Soviet Union and other parts of the

Soviet Bloc. To this end, the STIB's interrogators questioned refugees, defectors and deserters who fled from East Germany to the British Zone of Occupation. The release of the remaining STIB records to the United Kingdom National Archives in Kew in the mid-1990s was a ground-breaking event: it was the first release of post-Second World War scientific intelligence records.³

Nevertheless, the STIB's records are limited in their scope. They do not concern spying—that is to say, the collection of intelligence from secret human sources. They concern the gathering of intelligence from non-secret sources. Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, which is responsible for obtaining intelligence from spies, does not have an archive at the National Archives. In turning my thesis into a book, I needed to examine spying in the scientific and technological field in this period. Mass flight over the open border between the British Zone and East Germany greatly facilitated the creation and running of spy networks. No book on the subject would be complete unless it examined scientific spying as well.⁴

The US National Archives offered as little in the way of sources as the British. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has released records to them, but they shed little light on the CIA's operational methods, and none on the spies who reported to it because these are precisely the subjects which must remain secret. The CIA has released records on matters more distant from actual spying, such as the famous Berlin Tunnel operation and the reports American intelligence analysts prepared for the US government on such great events as the Berlin crises of 1948–1949 and 1958–1961.⁵

Therefore, the best course of action was to apply to the authority that holds the records of the GDR's Ministry of State Security. This authority is the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former GDR. It is generally known, for short, as the BStU.⁶ It makes the Stasi's records available according to the provisions of the German Parliament's Law on the Stasi Records (*Stasi-Unterlagen-Gesetz*, or StUG). The law permits research into the histories of the Stasi and of Nazism, about which the Stasi gathered a lot of information.⁷ However, it allows for information on secret services other than the Stasi to be withheld if making them available would be contrary to the public interest. Research on

intelligence and security operations is meant to be restricted to those of the Stasi. Nevertheless, there is obviously an overlap between the Stasi's counter-espionage, which is a proper subject of research, and Western spying, which is not. Permissible research into the former will shed light on the latter.

I applied for Stasi records on counter-espionage operations in the 1950s against the Western secret services. Researchers at the BStU are not allowed to conduct their research themselves, owing to the sensitivity of the information collected by the Stasi. The research is done for them by a case officer. Very little has been published on the Stasi's counter-espionage service. The BStU has itself published a couple of slim guides on the work of departments that formed part of that service.⁸ However, the best sources on it are the memoirs of former Stasi officers.⁹ The BStU feared the tension between research into the Stasi and research into Western secret services: it did not want to make available to me any information on Stasi operations which might shed light on the operations of the CIA, SIS or the West German secret services. For four years, its research into my topic on my behalf was extremely cautious and of very poor quality.

The records on Western spies of the Stasi's HAIX

This situation changed in 2003, when the excerpts relating to the crime of espionage from the monthly reports of HAIX for the period from October 1955 to December 1965 were made available to me.¹⁰ Since the HAIX was preparing the prosecutions of the spies its reports referred to, these records were obviously considered to shed light on the Stasi rather than the Western secret services. These excerpts represent a fascinating treasure trove of information on the spies run by the main Western secret services in these years. The services which principally ran them were the CIA, CIC, MIS, SIS, BND and BfV. The French secret services also make an appearance. The American secret services conducted very active espionage in the GDR, with the MIS and the CIC playing a major role in these operations. How major this role was is difficult to ascertain, since the Stasi tended to call the service operating the spies 'der amerikanische Geheimdienst' ('the American secret service') without identifying any particular service. The HAIX records provide further testimony of just how radical the freedom of

state security information, conceded by the StUG, has been. Helmut Müller-Enbergs has already pointed out that the exposure of the Stasi's entire agent network, both within the GDR and outside it, which the StUG has brought about, is an achievement unprecedented in world history.¹¹ The HAIX material adds to this knowledge by revealing agents of other secret services as well. However, since their names are blacked out of the records (for they are considered victims of the Stasi), their identities remain secret. The services which ran these people as spies would never have exposed them; such information is exactly what such services seek to keep secret. Their espionage is generally revealed, as in this case, by the counter-espionage service that arrested them.

The excerpts were photocopies of records which were themselves microfilmed copies of the original monthly reports of the HAIX. The microfilmed copies are, apparently, the only ones that remain. They bear the title *Tätigkeitsund Auswertungsberichte* (Operations and Assessment Reports). I applied for the reports up to December 1965 because I thought that they would be sufficient to show the effects of the Berlin Wall's construction. Why the starting point is October 1955 I do not know. All the reports state the number of those arrested that month and by which branch of the Ministry they had been arrested (the central Ministry itself, referred to as 'MfS', or one of its regional branches). They also set out the social category of those arrested (industrial worker, employee, farmer, pensioner, member of the armed forces, independent trader, member of an agricultural collective, unemployed and so forth), as well as their nationality. They state which political party the arrested person belonged to, or whether he or she belonged to no party. Most interestingly, the reports then contain summaries of the important cases the HAIX was then working on. I received only the summaries relating to spying (which is why I refer to my sources as 'excerpts'). However, since spying was considered a very serious crime, the number of summaries is large.

The reports for the period from October 1955 to January 1958 also contain one further fascinating piece of information: a table headed 'crimes of the people transferred to us' (*Strafdelikte der übergebenen Personen*). This table gives the number of those arrested in respect of each particular crime. These crimes are: spying (*Spionage*), harmful activity (*Schädlingstätigkeit*),

underground activity (*Untergrundtätigkeit*), subversion (*Diversion*), terrorism (*Terror*) and others. However, from February 1958 until December 1965 this table is no longer included in the reports. The reason is that from February 1958 the information in the table was transferred to an appendix. Unfortunately, the appendices were not microfilmed as the reports themselves were, so the information is lost. The tables for the period from October 1955 to January 1958 show that the Stasi arrested many people it considered to be spies. In the last three months of 1955 the Ministry arrested 251 people who were believed to be spies.¹² In 1956, it arrested 679¹³ and in 1957 it arrested 582.¹⁴ I turn to these figures again below.

The HAIX reports draw very heavily on interrogations of people arrested on suspicion of espionage, supported by searches of their homes. My most important finding is that these records are reliable: those HAIX concluded were spies really were so, according to HAIX's understanding of that term. The evidence HAIX adduces in support of its conclusions is good. As reliable records, they shed much light on how successful the main Western secret services were in recruiting and running spies in the GDR. They also shed light on the Stasi's success in exposing and arresting such people. They show how the Western services recruited their agents and communicated with them. They also show, in general terms, what the aims of Western spying in the GDR were and what kinds of intelligence they obtained.

I believe the records to be reliable because they show that HAIX searched for convincing evidence. It was demonstrably able to distinguish between spying and other forms of subversive activity. Although it relied heavily on confession evidence obtained in circumstances of cruel and intimidating imprisonment, from the mid-1950s it made little use of physical violence to extract confessions and was reluctant to rely entirely on evidence from confessions.¹⁵ Indeed, its reports refer to much evidence other than the arrested person's confession. Very often, the controlling service had provided its spies with communication equipment, such as a shortwave converter (to enable him to receive shortwave broadcasts from West Germany), invisible ink, codebooks and other secret writing equipment and even two-way radio sets so they could transmit messages as well as receive

them.¹⁶ The spies were either meant to use this equipment at once, or hide it and use it if they were unable in the future to go to West Berlin and communicate with their controller in person. In particular, they were given such equipment during the second Berlin Crisis of 1958–1961, when the Western secret services feared that their spies would be cut off from West Berlin by a blockade of the city or by some other means. The HAIX reports refer time and again to house searches which yielded finds of just such equipment and to identifications of ‘dead drops’ in which the spies had been told to leave the intelligence they had obtained so that a courier could collect it. Such incontrovertible physical evidence establishes that those arrested can only have been spies. If the suspected spy were married, the Stasi’s practice was to arrest both partners, since the spouse would usually at least know of the spy’s activities. The two of them were imprisoned and questioned separately; HAIX carefully compared the testimony of one with that of the other.

Nevertheless, HAIX clearly had a particular conception of spying: its understanding of it included not just the espionage of spies working for state secret services, but also that of resistance fighters who were members of such prominent resistance organizations as the Eastern Bureau (*Ostbüro*) of the West German Social Democratic Party (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, or SPD)¹⁷ and the Fighting Group against Inhumanity (*Kampfgruppe gegen Unmenschlichkeit*, or KgU).¹⁸ Nevertheless, this was reasonable since these resistance organizations did cooperate very closely with the main Western secret services and, above all, those of the United States and West Germany, passing on to them the intelligence they gathered in the GDR and allowing them to recruit resistance fighters in their ranks as spies. For example, the KgU created spy networks which worked for the CIC. The CIC received a carbon copy of every agent report. KgU agents also gathered much intelligence on the Soviet armed forces in East Germany on behalf of the United States’ MIS.¹⁹ US intelligence records establish that these forms of collaboration existed. The HAIX records provide further confirmation of them.²⁰

This was clearly the mentality of the entire Ministry, which naturally generated high figures—sometimes very high—for the number of people it arrested on suspicion of spying each year. These figures are in the hundreds.

It was HAIX's job to find out whether these people actually were spies. The spying of many of those who were spies was probably of little significance. Many were, in all likelihood, unimportant spies who gathered intelligence for resistance organizations rather than state secret services. This impression is reinforced by the summaries that constitute the largest part of each excerpt. They are described as 'some of the most important cases currently being worked on' (*einige der wichtigsten zur Zeit in Bearbeitung befindlichen Vorgänge*).²¹ Very many of these 'important cases' are cases of spying. Nevertheless, the number of such summaries of spying cases in each report is far lower than the number of suspected spying cases handed over to HAIX that month. For example, 94 suspected spying cases were transferred to it in October 1955. However, the summaries only refer to 38 people suspected of spying. The evidence against them was considered strong.²² This was itself a high figure. In November 1955, HAIX received 71 people suspected of spying, yet the summaries refer to only 14 people suspected of the offence, and in some of these cases the evidence was very weak. The report for January 1959 only refers in its summary of 'important cases' to nine people being investigated on suspicion of spying (of course, by this time there is no table available giving an overall figure for the month).²³ It needs to be stressed that these figures relate to cases of *suspected* spying. In a considerable number of cases no conclusive evidence was obtained to support the suspicion; those arrested were accordingly released.²⁴ However, in many cases HAIX makes an express finding in the summary that the person concerned was a spy. Indeed, in some cases a later report contains an account of the trial of the spy in question, on which HAIX was required to report. It may be that HAIX did indeed make mistakes and wrongly concluded that the case in question was one of espionage. However, any security service may make mistakes. This danger may have been greater in the Stasi's case since Communism tended to make its believers regard hostile activities against them as connected forms of capitalist subversion. Nevertheless, my firm view, after reading more than ten years' worth of HAIX reports, is that it sought sound evidence of spying that any Western counter-intelligence officer would consider good. The reports refer often enough to convincing evidence of spying that, even making allowance for the influence of ideology and mistakes, it would be wrong to consider them as misrepresenting the scale and character of Western espionage in the GDR.

Western espionage in the GDR, 1953–1961

What do HAIX's records show about the operations of the Western secret services in the GDR? First of all, the number of spies they managed to recruit shows that the Communist state experienced an intense spying crisis. Its government institutions, armed forces, factories and research laboratories were more deeply penetrated by spies than those of any other state in the Soviet Bloc. Indeed, the Western secret services used their position in the GDR to operate against the rest of the Bloc. Save for the Federal Republic of Germany, no other state has ever been so deeply penetrated by spies. The Stasi's foreign intelligence service, the *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung* (Main Intelligence Directorate, or HVA), built a very large agent network in the Federal Republic. However, its great success only began in the 1960s.²⁵ At the beginning of that decade, Markus Wolf, the HVA's chief, informed the Stasi's highest body, the Kollegium, that his service did not have enough sources in the most important West German targets. One such target that he specified was the then main governing party, the Christian Democratic Party (*Christlichdemokratische Union*, or CDU).²⁶

The main cause of the GDR's spying crisis was the same as that of the Federal Republic's: the flight of refugees from the former to the latter. This caused the Federal Republic's prolonged crisis because the HVA could send its agents to the West as refugees. The number of refugees was so great that the Western security services had little chance of identifying them as spies. These agents formed the basis of the HVA's highly successful network in West Germany.²⁷

The refugees caused the GDR's spying crisis by identifying for the Western secret services people who worked in key targets in East Germany—the main ministries, key factories, important research institutes, the armed forces and the Soviet-run uranium-mining enterprise, the Wismut AG—who were strongly anti-Communist and might, therefore, be willing to spy for a Western intelligence service. This identification occurred soon after their arrival in West Berlin or the Federal Republic, when people of interest were invited to attend an interview with one or more Western intelligence services.²⁸ The people they named were then invited, by letter or by courier,

to visit West Berlin, where an attempt to recruit them was made. These people were usually former colleagues at work or friends or relatives. That an arrested spy had been put in touch with a Western secret service by these means are often the opening words of the case summaries contained in HAIX's *Tätigkeitsberichte*. The reports show that the overwhelming majority of arrested spies were identified by refugees and were recruited with their assistance. This is not merely a conclusion on the Communists' part: it is supported by the records of the CIA.²⁹ Most refugees chose to flee through West Berlin because it was easy to reach; once there, refugees were flown to West Germany.

It is not enough to recruit good spies; an intelligence agency must be able to give them instructions and obtain intelligence from them.³⁰ In the 1950s the Western secret services preferred to communicate with their spies by means of personal meetings between spy and controller in West Berlin, rather than by radio, secret writing, courier or dead drop, though these methods were also used. At these meetings the spy provided the information he or she had collected and the controller examined it, gave whatever training or encouragement was needed and passed on further instructions. This was the best possible method of communication because it was safer and more comprehensive than the others. The only risk the spy took was that of crossing over to West Berlin. The spy could provide far more information at a meeting than could be sent in a letter.³¹ Consequently, mass flight and West Berlin together enabled the Western secret services to build up large networks of agents in the GDR, which was not possible in the Soviet Union. The extent of their success against the other satellites is uncertain, but it is clear that it did not equal the success achieved against the GDR. The GDR was, therefore, crucial to Western efforts to spy on the entire Bloc. The state security chief, Ernst Wollweber, maintained in 1954 that the GDR represented the basis for the Western secret services' operations against the whole of the Soviet Bloc.³²

Although the Western services evidently managed to recruit a lot of spies, precisely how large these networks were is less clear. First, HAIX records state the number arrested on suspicion of spying (though only for the years 1955–1958), but not how many were, in its view, spies. Second, the categories of spying, harmful activity, underground activity), subversion

and terrorism over-lapped because many resistance organizations based in West Berlin engaged in a variety of resistance activities, including intelligence collection, on behalf of the Western secret services (above all, those of the United States) and were funded by them (again, chiefly by US intelligence). This is one reason why the Stasi used the word ‘agents’ (*Agenten*) to describe these various categories of people.

Nevertheless, it is evident that both the US intelligence services and the BND engaged in mass espionage in the GDR. HAIX records for the years 1955–1965 indicate that hundreds of people believed to be spies were arrested each year. The Stasi’s ‘Big Operations’ (*Großaktionen*) of the years 1953–1955 confirm this impression. There were mass arrests of spies and resistance fighters masterminded by Wollweber, the then state security chief, and directed by his deputy, Erich Mielke. They were designed to do severe damage to Western spying and subversion and provide support for the false allegation by the Communist regime that the workers’ uprising of June 1953 had been a long-planned, well-organized attempt by the Western powers to overthrow it and restore capitalism in East Germany. The KGB gave the Stasi crucial help in carrying out these operations, providing it with information on Western espionage in the GDR obtained from its penetration agents in the SIS, Kim Philby and George Blake, and its agent in the BND, Heinz Felfe.^{[33](#)}

In the first ‘Big Operation’, *Feuerwerk* (‘Firework’) of October 1953, more than 100 ‘agents’ were arrested, the principal victims being chiefly spies of the BND’s forerunner, the Gehlen Organization (often known as the ‘Org’). The next ‘Big Operation’, *Pfeil* (‘Arrow’), chiefly targeted the spy networks of the Org and the American and French secret services. It was carried out in August 1954 and led to the arrest of 547 spies (277 belonging to the Org, 176 to the US intelligence services and 94 to the French). The arrests showed that the secret services concerned had recruited high-level sources and had penetrated the GDR’s industry. Important administrators were among those arrested. More industrial workers (78), company employees (70) and state employees (55) were arrested than people of any other social category. Eleven scientists were arrested, as were engineers and soldiers of the embryonic East German army, the *Kasernierte Volkspolizei* (KVP). Many of those arrested were tasked with spying on the Soviet and

East German armed forces. To prepare for war, agents had been equipped with radios with which to broadcast intelligence. They would not go into action until war broke out.

The last operation, '*Blitz*' ('Lightning'), was carried out over a period of months between December 1954 and the spring of 1955. It targeted both resistance organizations and spies, resulting in 521 such victims being arrested over the course of the operation. The first wave of arrests was directed against resistance groups—mainly the KgU, the UfJ and the Eastern Bureaux of the West German political parties. The second wave of arrests, codenamed '*Frühling*', was carried out in 1955 and targeted both spies and members of resistance organizations. The SIS spy networks were particular targets; five were destroyed, more than any other service. On 14 April, Mielke reported on '*Blitz*' to the Socialist Unity Party's Central Committee. Of the 521 people arrested, he said 188 had been agents of the 'American secret service', 105 agents of the 'British secret service' and about 100 agents of West German services. As far as resistance organizations were concerned, 56 had been KgU agents, 32 UfJ agents, 27 agents of the FDP-Ostbüro and 17 agents of the SPD-Ostbüro. Mielke uses the word 'agent' rather than 'spy', and his figures for secret service losses include, in addition to spies, resistance fighters and people who simply had suspicious Western contacts. Most of the agents had communicated with their controllers by meeting them in West Berlin. However, fear of war was such that the Western services had supplied their agents with alternative means of communication, should West Berlin be overrun by the Warsaw Pact. The arrests showed extensive penetration of the GDR's state administration, big factories and railway network. The whole GDR transport system would be sabotaged if war broke out, in order to slow the advance of the Warsaw Pact's armies.

Mielke also stressed that Western spying and propaganda were closely connected: RIAS came across spy-candidates—often people dissatisfied with conditions in the GDR—as it searched for informants on events in East Germany; it passed them on to the Western secret services (particularly those of the United States). The *Ostbüros* of the West German political parties did the same for the American and British secret services. The Org had many agents in the 'bourgeois parties' permitted in the GDR. The close

connection between spying, propaganda and non-Communist politics underlines that it was very natural for the Stasi to regard the various categories of hostile activity as merely different manifestations of Western malice and to arrest those concerned together. Certainly, the Socialist Unity Party did not make much of a distinction between spies and resistance fighters. On 12 April the Council of Ministers announced the arrest of '521 agents of Western secret services' (the Party newspaper, *Neues Deutschland*, called them, more accurately, '521 spies and subversives').³⁴ These arrests were followed that summer by a wave of show trials.³⁵ Further arrests took place in the autumn. In Operation 'Wespennest' ('Wasps' Nest'), the Stasi arrested spies reporting to a CIA scientific intelligence team that it had managed to penetrate. By December it had arrested 42 people and planned to arrest 25 more. As stated above, in the last three months of 1955 the Ministry arrested 251 people it believed to be spies (the 'Wespennest' arrests are among this number). In 1956, it arrested 679 people it suspected of spying and in 1957 it arrested 582. Thereafter, global figures are not available. However, the numerous summaries of spy cases in HAIX, some of them referring to excellent sources of intelligence, show that Western spying was still on a large scale and was highly successful. The Berlin Wall's construction in and after August 1961 led to a big increase in the number of Western spies arrested, and particularly of spies reporting to the *Bundesnachrichtendienst*.

The Communist claim that the Western secret services, and above all those of the United States, recruited large numbers of spies in the GDR is confirmed by American and British sources. Former CIA officers have referred to the large networks that the US secret services built up and have claimed that from them a huge amount of military, economic, political and scientific intelligence was obtained.³⁶ Stasi sources maintain that large-scale recruitment of spies was above all the policy of the US secret services.³⁷ The BND, however, ran the largest network. The SIS preferred to recruit high-level sources in the state apparatus who would be capable of providing high-grade intelligence over a long period. That said, it still ran a substantial number of spies in the Soviet Bloc. George Blake, in his autobiography, has maintained that he betrayed about 400 SIS spies in the Bloc to the KGB.³⁸ That figure is consistent with the statement in a ZAIG report from 1976 that owing to Blake the Stasi was able to identify about

100 SIS spies in the GDR in the years 1958–1961. These were exactly the high-level sources in the state apparatus that the SIS had been looking to recruit. One was a shorthand secretary who worked for the Council of Ministers. Just such a secretary, stated, not by the ZAIG, but by HAIX, to be an SIS spy, is found in the HAIX summary for February 1958.³⁹ Another was a senior official at the Ministry for Mechanical Engineering.⁴⁰

HAIX records show that the open border between the Soviet and Western Sectors in Berlin was crucial to the success of Western operations in the Eastern Bloc. The Western secret services' espionage and subversion in the GDR was so dependent on it remaining open that they foresaw that the Soviet and East German regimes might close it and prepared throughout the 1950s for that possibility. Nikita Khrushchev's ultimatum of November 1958 to the Western governments on the Berlin and German questions was a clear signal to them that they might soon lose their bases in West Berlin, or that those bases would soon be made much less valuable to them by the closing of the sectoral border, and from that time they prepared hectically for all possible resolutions of the Berlin crisis.⁴¹ It was unclear what Khrushchev's intentions were. The likeliest action on his part was believed to be a blockade of West Berlin: the access routes, by air, water and land, from West Germany would be closed. Of course, this was a worst-case analysis: the loss of the Allied powers' access routes was the worst result imaginable, since it would mean their expulsion from West Berlin. NATO's military planning concentrated on ways of breaking a blockade. A blockade might lead to war. War would lead to the Western secret services' expulsion from West Berlin—or at least to a Soviet occupation of the city, which would make any spying close to impossible. If the Western governments yielded to Khrushchev's ultimatum, their secret services would not be permitted to operate from West Berlin, for that was one of the provisions of the ultimatum. The Western secret services had to prepare for those possibilities as well. Lastly, they had to prepare for a closure of the sectoral border which prevented East Germans from reaching West Berlin.

They prepared, as they had done throughout the 1950s, by equipping their spies with alternative forms of communication. Both their expulsion from the city and the closure of the sectoral border would cut their communication link with their spies. Either would also make it much harder

to recruit spies and give support to underground resistance in the GDR. They distributed shortwave radio converters so that spies could receive shortwave radio transmissions from West Germany; or they told spies to buy radios considered suitable for receiving short-wave transmissions; they handed over paper and invisible ink so the spy could provide intelligence in secret writing in a letter posted to a cover address in the West; they created dead drops in which couriers could place instructions and from which they could take intelligence left there by the spy; some spies were given two-way radio sets with which they could broadcast intelligence to the West. Over the next few years, the Stasi managed to arrest many spies who had been given new means of communication. The HAIX reports refer time and again to house searches in which this communication equipment was found. It is incontrovertible physical evidence of spying.⁴²

Khrushchev and Ulbricht finally decided to close the sectoral border, which they did in August 1961. This ended a great era of Western spying in the Soviet Bloc; indeed, on present evidence this was the most successful era in the entire 74-year history of the Soviet Union. Since it was very hard for East Germans now to make their way to West Germany, the Western secret services were deprived of their greatest assets: the refugee stream and West Berlin. Recruitment of spies was now harder because refugees could no longer identify promising candidates on the same scale as before. Nor could East Germans go over to West Berlin for a day, where their promise as spies could be spotted and they could be recruited. Instead, the Western services had to recruit West Germans as intermediaries and use them to recruit their relatives, friends or business acquaintances in East Germany. Business trips by West Germans to the GDR had to be thoroughly exploited for intelligence. Since the BND was better placed to do these things than any other service, it emerged in the 1960s as the leading service operating in the GDR. Like the Stasi, it became an all-German service, with both West German and East German agents. Moreover, in the decades after the Berlin Wall was built, all the Western services devoted increasing attention to recruiting GDR representatives sent or posted abroad.

Their spies' communication link with them was much more vulnerable than it had been before 1961: secret writing in letters, postcards and magazines posted to the West, couriers, dead drops and radio transmissions had to take

the place of personal meetings in West Berlin. However, all these forms of communication had the weakness that, unlike the personal meeting, they started on East German soil and were therefore more vulnerable to conscientious counter-espionage work by the Stasi. Secret writing was the spies' principal method of communicating intelligence; consequently, the most important division in the Stasi's counter-espionage service was the post interception section, *Abteilung M*⁴³ It was very successful in identifying suspicious correspondence. The Stasi's immense surveillance capability now came into its own: in addition to thorough post interception, those people entering or leaving the GDR could be examined and searched; its huge informer network could report approaches; radio detection could be used to spot and locate radio transmissions. All the communication methods available to the spy required a regular supply of new equipment, which was also a weakness. The BND's fateful decision in the couple of years immediately following the Berlin Wall's construction was to use parcels sent from West Germany to supply its spies in East Germany with communication equipment, instructions and money. Thorough examination of parcels arriving from the West enabled the Stasi to arrest many of the BND's spies. It also succeeded in finding and reading messages written in secret writing and in identifying some of the BND's couriers. The number of spies it arrested soared. In 1962 its counter-espionage team in East Berlin arrested more than two-and-a-half times as many spies as in 1961. It did even better in 1963, arresting more than seven-and-a-half times as many spies as in 1961. In 1964 it arrested four times as many spies as in 1961. The treason of its officer, Heinz Felfe, contributed to the BND's losses. Felfe was arrested in November 1961; thereafter, the Soviet Bloc's security services were able to arrest BND spies whom he had betrayed.⁴⁴ In the 53 months between August 1961 and December 1965, HAIX summaries of important cases of espionage show that at least 258 spies were arrested. Of these 156 (approximately 60 per cent) were spies of the BND. 54 (about 21 per cent) were American spies; 27 (approximately 10 per cent) were spies of the BfV; 20 (about 8 per cent) were French spies. One SIS spy (0.4 per cent) was arrested.⁴⁵ The numerous arrests, combined with the much harder conditions, caused many people to abandon spying. The BND lost most of its spies in East Germany owing to the construction of the Berlin Wall.⁴⁶

Conclusion

The HAIX records of cases of spying are remarkable documents. They underline how much making the Stasi's records available to scholars has enhanced understanding of security and intelligence. They show that East Germany faced an intense espionage crisis in the decade before the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961. This crisis resulted from fierce anti-Communism among East Germans, the availability of West Berlin as a base for spying right next to the GDR and the mass flight of refugees from East Germany to West Germany. In their spying on the Soviet Union, the Western secret services never had such favourable conditions and were consequently less successful. As the recent US public inquiry into the collection of intelligence on weapons of mass destruction conceded, '50 years of pounding away at the Soviet Union resulted in only a handful of truly important human sources.'⁴⁷ The challenge of Western espionage helped to improve the skills of the Stasi's counter-espionage divisions. One of those divisions, HAIX, became a very capable investigator into Western spying and developed a good understanding of the Western services' operations. However, the KGB was a very valuable partner for the Stasi in these years. The '*Großaktionen*' would not have achieved such success if the KGB had not had such high-level sources in the SIS and the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* as Philby, Blake and Felfe. Such traitors were only able to diminish the problem the Stasi faced. The root of the problem was the mass flight of refugees to West Germany; this problem could only be diminished permanently if that flight were stopped. This the Communist regime achieved, at least for a time, in August 1961, with the construction of the Berlin Wall. It was not built to suppress Western espionage, but it still benefited the Stasi's counter-espionage divisions. From that point on they steadily achieved the upper hand over the spying operations in the GDR of the West German secret services.

Notes

1 K.-D.Henke, S.Suckut, C.Vollnhals, W.Süß and R.Engelmann, eds., *Anatomie der Staatssicherheit: Geschichte, Struktur und Methoden—MfS Handbuch*, Berlin: BStU, 1995; Mike Dennis, *The Stasi: Myth and Reality*, London: Pearson Education, 2003, pp. 67–9.

2 In 1952 Intelligence Division became the British Intelligence Organization, Germany (BIO(G)). BIO(G) was dissolved in 1954. For more on the organization, see Paul Maddrell, 'Britain's Exploitation of Occupied Germany for Scientific and Technical Intelligence on the Soviet Union', PhD thesis, Cambridge University, 1999, p. 1, 3n.

3 The release formed part of the Waldegrave Initiative on Open Government. The STIB's archive is held at the National Archives, Kew, London, as DEFE 41. For more on this, see www.history.ac.uk/reviews/papers/elkesresp.html.

4 See Paul Maddrell, *Spying on Science: Western Intelligence in Divided Germany, 1945–1961*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 53–8, 119–30.

5 See D.Steury, ed., *On the Front Lines of the Cold War: Documents on the Intelligence War in Berlin, 1946 to 1961*, Washington, DC: CIA History Staff, Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1999; D.Murphy, S.Kondrashev and G.Bailey, *Battle-ground Berlin: CIA vs. KGB in the Cold War*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997.

6 *Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik* (BStU). It is sometimes called the 'Birthler Authority', after the name of its chief, Marianne Birthler.

7 For an explanation of how the StUG works, see Paul Maddrell, 'The Revolution Made Law: The Work Since 2001 of the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the Former German Democratic Republic', *Cold War History*, 2004, vol. 4, no. 3, pp. 153–62.

8 Hannah Labrenz-Weiß, *Die Hauptabteilung II: Spionageabwehr*, Berlin: BStU, 1998; Maria Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII: Volkswirtschaft*, Berlin: BStU, 1995.

9 Helmut Wagner, *Schöne Grüße aus Pullach*, Berlin: edition ost/Das Neue Berlin, 2001; J.Schwarz, *Bis Zum Bitteren Ende*, Schkeuditz: GNN-Verlag, 1995.

10 The references to these reports run from BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11147 (October 1955) to BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11267 (December 1965).

11 Helmut Müller-Enbergs, ‘Kleine Geschichte zum Findhilfsmittel namens “Rosenholz”’, *Deutschland Archiv*, vol. 5, 2003, p. 751.

12 BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11147-MF-11149, *Tätigkeits- und Auswertungsberichte der HAIX*.

13 BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11150-MF-11160, *Tätigkeits- und Auswertungsberichte der HAIX*.

14 BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11161–MF-11172, *Tätigkeits- und Auswertungsberichte der HAIX*.

15 Schwarz, *Bis Zum Bitteren Ende*, pp. 48–9.

16 See Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi’s Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, ch. 8, for the role of communication and its function as evidence.

17 See, for example, BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11184, *Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Januar 1959*, which refers to a suspected spy of the SPD-Ostbüro.

18 See also, for example, BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11147, *Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Oktober 1955*, which refers to the case of someone who spied both for the West German CDU and for the French secret service, the Deuxième Bureau.

19 B.Stöver, *Die Befreiung vom Kommunismus: Amerikanische ‘Liberation Policy’ im Kalten Krieg 1947–1991*, Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2002, pp. 274–81; Murphy *et al*, *Battleground Berlin*, pp. 108–10; Maddrell, *Spying on Science*, pp. 130–42.

20 See, for example, BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11147, *Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Oktober 1955*; BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11149,

Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Dezember 1955; BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11228, Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für September 1962; BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11232, Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Januar 1963; BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11254, Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für November 1964; BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11255, Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Oktober 1965.

21 This is the heading above them in 1955, though by 1959 it had become 'important investigation cases which are currently being worked on' ('wichtige Untersuchungsvorgänge, die zur Zeit bearbeitet werden').

22 BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11147, *Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Oktober 1955.*

23 BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11184, *Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Januar 1959.*

24 BStU, ZA, MfS-HAIX, MF-11147, *Tätigkeitsbericht der HAIX für Oktober 1955.*

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28 See Maddrell, *Spying on Science*, pp. 55–6.

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30 Heinz Geyer, 'Das Verbindungssystem der HVA', conference on 'Hauptverwaltung A: Geschichte, Aufgaben, Einsichten', 17–18 November 2007, Centre for Cold War Studies, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark. Reprinted in K.Eichner and G.Schramm, eds, *Hauptverwaltung A: Geschichte, Aufgaben, Einsichten*, Berlin: edition ost, 2008. See also Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, ch. 8.

31 Maddrell, *Spying on Science*, pp. 119–25.

32 Speech to 20th Plenum of the Socialist Unity Party Central Committee, 9 September 1954, quoted in K.W.Fricke and Roger Engelmann, eds., 'Konzentrierte Schläge': *Staatssicherheitsaktionen und politische Prozesse in der DDR 1953–1956*, Berlin: Links Verlag, 1998, p. 312.

33 Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive*, pp. 520–1.

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43 Schwarz, *Bis Zum Bitteren Ende*, p. 129. For the Stasi's secret writing, see Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, ch. 9.

44 Erich Schmidt-Eenboom, *Schnüffler Ohne Nase*, Düsseldorf: ECON Verlag, 1993, pp. 118–19. Heinz Felfe died in May 2008 at the age of 90.

45 Maddrell, *Spying on Science*, pp. 247–50, 254–67.

46 *Capital* (Hamburg), vol. 8, 1968, p. 67.

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3

The rise and fall of West German intelligence operations against East Germany

Erich Schmidt-Eenboom

West German intelligence activities against the German Democratic Republic (GDR) were largely successful in the early part of the Cold War. In later years West German intelligence faced a formidable adversary in the form of the East German Ministry for State Security, which crippled its human intelligence (HUMINT) arm. This chapter traces the historical development of the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND) and its predecessor, the Gehlen Organization, as it fought the intelligence war in a divided Germany.

Self-assurance

Espionage reports by the BND after the fall of Reinhard Gehlen and in the era of BND president Hans-Georg Wieck (1985–1990) show¹ that the staff at Pullach concentrated 40 percent of their attention on the GDR, and equally intensively on the Soviet Union and her satellites, including Yugoslavia. Nearly the same values can be applied to the BND both in 1957, when the service employed 1,245 personnel, and the operations of the then 6,750 persons in 1989. A look at the six-step intelligence priorities of the BND² for the 1980s confirms these findings,³ though stating that the Soviet Union as the leading power within the Warsaw Pact drew slightly more attention than the GDR. In practical intelligence work, however, the close-range reconnaissance directed at the GDR ranked first because of the language advantage.

The GDR was the core business of the BND, with the main priority being military issues, e.g. the deployment, disposition, defense technology and combat strength of ground forces. With the start of the social-liberal coalition and the enforcement of the *Ostpolitik*, intelligence coordinator Horst Ehmke transferred more and more political tasks into the control of

the Federal Chancellery, but the information flow on military issues remained dominant. The (planned) economy always came third.

Periodization

The golden years of West German espionage lasted approximately eight years— from 1945 to 1949 in the Soviet occupation zone, and from 1949 to 1953 during the GDR's first Olympiad. Dozens of associated news dealers, informers from all areas of social life, military intelligence's alley cats and the floods of refugees and home-comers washed more and more pieces of the puzzle ashore in Pullach, completing the picture of the situation. The (black) market of information was flourishing, not just in the four-power cities of Berlin and Vienna, but also in the area reaching from Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania to Upper Austria. In this period, the Gehlen Organization did not just use travelers, but also had numerous interior sources from the bodies of the GDR state and Eastern German Soviet occupation zone (SBZ) government at its disposal.

Four examples illustrate the types of sources the Gehlen Organization used. Among the best known is Helene Barczatis, born in 1912. From April 1949 onwards she was personal assistant of Otto Grotewohl, later to be GDR prime minister; from June 1953 onwards she was a case officer in the prime minister's office. She was linked to the Gehlen Organization agent, Karl Laurenz, by ties of friendship and she served as his source for more than ten years. Agent *Gänseblümchen* ('daisy') was arrested by the Ministry for State Security on 4 March 1955 and put on trial together with Laurenz on 23 September. She was sentenced to death and executed on 23 November in Dresden, even though she had not been able to submit any top information.⁴

The Gehlen Organization managed to recruit Walter Gramsch, born in 1897. After the war he became Assistant Secretary of State in Saxony-Anhalt, and from August 1947 onwards was head of the traffic department of the *Deutsche Verwaltung für Handel und Versorgung* ('German Administration Department for Trade and Supplies') and an agent for the Gehlen Organization. 'Brutus' held many top positions within the traffic administration between 1949 and 1953 and was a close colleague of Ernst Wollweber, who later became Minister for State Security.

Less known is Hanns Jess, born in 1893. From 1945 to 1948 he was director of the *Reichsbahndirektion Schwerin* and a Gehlen Organization go-between. He defected to West Germany as early as 1949 and started a police career. From 1950 he was vice police president in Frankfurt/Main, then, from March 1952 onwards he was head of the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) and in 1954/1955 he was provisional head of the *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* (BfV) ('Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution').

Hermann Kastner, born in 1886, was chairman of the liberal democratic party of the GDR and deputy prime minister. He was able to act as a Gehlen Organization source until he fled in September 1956.⁵

This small selection is only the tip of the iceberg—there were numerous sustainable interior sources.

Between 1953 and 1955, the *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* (MfS) struck back with operations *Feuerwerk* and *Pfeil* ('Fireworks' and 'Arrow'). When GDR State Secretary, Albert Norden, took stock in 1954, he announced the arrest of 547 Gehlen Organization agents. On 12 April 1955, secret service leader Ernst Wollweber went one better, announcing the seizure of another 521 Western spies.⁶ Even though these propaganda figures also included opponents of the regime, Gehlen actually lost a substantial part of his spy web—especially those agents handled by the West Berlin branches. Besides the loss of agents, the subsequent show trials complicated the recruitment of new sources.

Early on, Gehlen listened to the call to push forward into the international community of signals intelligence (SIGINT). Hence, he appointed Leo Hepp, the former chief of staff at the head of the Nazi army intelligence organization as the leader of his technical department. He was able to gain his first laurels from the American principals during the Berlin Blockade, as the Gehlen Organization managed to trace and evaluate the reactions of the 24th Soviet Air Army with just 18 signal intelligence experts. However, appendix 5 of a draft guideline from Pullach titled 'Structure and Tasks of the Communications Department' implies that Gehlen Organization signals intelligence was still in its infancy in June 1950, having 50 employees.

Beside the signals intelligence base ‘Dustbin’ at the drill ground Baumholder, Hepp had just three intercept platforms with retransmitters at Bremen, Butzbach and on the Chiemsee at his disposal.

By June 1950 the Gehlen Organization had trained 22 radio operators for service abroad (*Aussenfunker*—AFU) and another one was being trained—nine were deployed in the GDR, one in Poland, three in West Berlin and nine in other countries. Information in detailed records shows the situation to be even worse than this. Just three radio operators were actually in action in the GDR; two in the CSSR; one in Poland; two on secret mission in West Berlin; and one in Austria. Ten out of those 22 had already been put out of action in 1950: five in the GDR; two in Yugoslavia; and one each in West Berlin, the CSSR and Poland. And the losses were to increase further: ‘Several undercover agents have been lost in the SBZ due to mistakes unconnected with their radio transmissions in 1953’, states a classified 1960 report by Albert Praun (‘Schwarz’), head of BND telecommunications.⁷

The construction of the Berlin Wall around the GDR on 13 August 1961 did not lead to an immediate loss of agents. However, their numbers decreased continually, as defections could not be fully compensated by the recruitment of new informers. More far-reaching, however, was the 1961 arrest of Heinz Felfe, a KGB mole at the BND.⁸

The BND’s deficiencies under the aging Gehlen, e.g. the stagnation in HUMINT reports from the GDR in the later half of the 1960s, are well-known through the report of the Mercker Commission to the Federal government. The change with Gerhard Wessel in May 1968 and, even more importantly, the nomination of homeland-security agent Richard Meier as head of the BND Department 1 (*Beschaffung*—acquisition) in May 1970 promised new momentum.⁹ ‘Manthey’ commanded the concentration on the exploitation of inner sources. First however, he pushed for the use of transit sources (approximately 70 percent of all BND sources) on the 11 transit routes existing after the all-German Transit Agreement of December 1971, as the recruitment of direct sources from government and administrative bodies had fallen short of initial expectations.

MfS Major General Günther Kratsch's situation report in August 1987 provides a statistically backed overview of the accelerated BND spying activity in the GDR between 1977 and 1986. According the report, 163 agents had been arrested within this nine-year span, 94 of them by the BND, with roughly equivalent numbers of GDR and BRD citizens. Pullach's sources were at the same time the least valuable ones, with a considerable proportion consisting of workers and low-wage earners, such as drivers and inland sailors. Top assets were scarce within the West German agencies: four in intermediate levels of travel cadres; and five in the lower ranks of police, foreign trade or the printing plant of *Neues Deutschland*. Although BND presidents Gerhard Wessel and Klaus Kinkel constantly stressed that the risk of losing agents had to be lowered and that there had to be a stricter balancing of interests between the fruits of intelligence operations and the endangerment of BND agents, we have to register the fact that passengers were still used in military intelligence, even though the results of their operations were marginal, as can be exemplified by the case of Wolfgang Rietig.¹⁰

Let us return to the topic of SIGINT. After a steady growth of capacities and bases in both the BND and the *Bundeswehr*, the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s were the golden age of West German electronic reconnaissance, making up for about 90 percent of all secret information obtained. This new efficiency was also due to close cooperation with American and British organizations. Maps from the period show a chain of BND bases reaching from Husum in the north to Bad Aibling in the south, as well as the web of *Bundeswehr* intercept bases reaching from Flensburg to Langenargen. The BND wiretapping program (LAUS) alone comprised 80 sub-programs.

The BND had to cope with a sharp decline in this particularly profitable field of intelligence at the beginning of the 1980s as Pullach's successes in this area were unveiled and the GDR laid more and more bug-proof copper-cored cables. Nevertheless, electronic reconnaissance remained successful. In the military sector, the infiltration of Soviet satellite communications and the capture of surface-to-air telecommunications provided information on airborne formations, as well as radar- and maneuver-related SIGINT. In economic espionage, it was possible to sustain access to the radio network, as shown by classified analytical report 747 of 14 January 1980, which

contains a decade report from the District Committee Rossau to the Regional Committee Halle (chemistry sector). Likewise, the BND succeeded in the field of political espionage and managed to listen in on party communications, as revealed by the transcript of a phone call between the Regional Committee Potsdam and the SED Central Committee of 5 October 1981. The fact that open source intelligence (OSINT) played an important role in the BND was generally appreciated by the Western partner organizations.

Methods

In order to understand the proceedings of the BND, we have to examine HUMINT methods. Within the supreme discipline of any secret service (i.e. espionage with human sources), the BND differentiates between operational and receptive sources. The BND ranks its operational sources according to their quality: interior sources, defectors, external sources and informers, i.e. those who have not especially been instructed. The so-called ‘external sources’ (*Außenquellen*—AQ) are either stationary or traveling external sources and can operate both as observers and for targeted conversations.

Unfortunately, there is no statistical evidence available whatsoever on the distribution of BND agents in these categories; at most we have fragmentary information. However, a snapshot indicates the dimensions: Sub-department IC (other Soviet Bloc operative) under ‘Bichler’ was, together with Departments IC1 and IC2, responsible for the area between Poland and the Danube region, including Yugoslavia. Its operational office was situated in Munich, Schwanthaler Strasse, maintaining nearly 1,000 secret contacts. Among these, only about 20 (2 percent) were classified as interior sources. The bulk of information gatherers were traveling conversational spies who could easily be handled by, and report to, their case officers. The second most important group was that of stationary conversational spies who usually delivered their information by mail.

The so-called ‘receptive sources’ in espionage against the GDR comprised the border information network (customs controls used for counter-espionage purposes); the interrogation centers with seven main offices (shared with the USA and the UK); the questioning of refugees and train

passengers; and home interviews of transient GDR citizens and emigrated pensioners, as well as defectors (about 7,000 from the *Nationale Volksarmee* alone between 1952 and 1990). Additionally, mail and telecommunications controls (e.g. 1.8 million letters from Warsaw Pact countries in 1978); the intelligence gathered by partner organizations (about 30 residents for 45 partner services in 1960; about 50 residents for 75 partner services in 1982), including reports from partner organizations through some sort of supranational barter trade; the technological exchange of Soviet military equipment, in particular with Israel; and indirect initiations of GDR foreign and travel cadres from the 1980s, with nearly 200 initiation attempts.

This path had been selected under BND president, Klaus Kinkel, but was also being followed in Cairo, Djakarta, Vienna and Washington. It turned out not to be crowned with the desired success. Let us examine one case to exemplify this.

In 1985, a BND team traveled to the US capital in order to recruit a GDR diplomat from the embassy of the GDR. The operation was supposed to be conducted in cooperation with the FBI. Aldrich Ames of the partner organization (the Central Intelligence Agency—CIA) was informed of the plans. However, hopes were dashed as the target person never went to a public place in Washington, so the BND agents had to leave without achieving anything. After Aldrich Ames was unmasked as a long-serving KGB spy in 1992, the security department in Pullach tried to assess the damage he had done to the BND—it turned out he was involved in the failed recruitment.

Deficiency 1

There are two major deficiencies in the BND's work. The first was the moles. When the leading MfS officer, Günther Kratsch recited the balance of arrests in 1987, he made out five factors were responsible for the success of counter-intelligence: hints from 'brother organizations'—3 percent; own investigations—6 percent; operational measures, process and safety routines and unofficial collaborators—17 percent each; and initial tips from the operational area—50 percent.

A banal precondition for the success of HUMINT is that an intelligence service deploys undercover agents instead of scouts virtually accredited with the enemy's counter-espionage. Another banal precondition is that the case officers and contacts act incognito and that their backers, from the head of a directorate to the head of a sub-department, remain in the dark. The Gehlen Organization and the BND, however, disregarded these basics continuously. Most of its spies in the GDR were in the spotlight of the MfS and arrested from the outset, even if kept on the long leash of counter-intelligence. Even 'postmen', truck drivers of the forwarder companies Schencker or Dachser, filling dead drops, were rarely able to maintain the secrecy of letters.

The infiltration of enemy spies within the BND has become known from spectacular cases, like those of Heinz Felfe, Alfred Spuhler¹¹ or Gabriele Gast, as well as a handful of the lesser-known individuals. However, the actual extent remains largely unknown. Only a few specialists know today that the former SS Regiment Leader with the Reich Security Head Office and head of the *Wehrmacht* field police, Willi Krichbaum, was a KGB agent who was posthumously uncovered. He had been a Gehlen Organization personnel officer since 1946, and from 1951 he was head of the Regional Office Bad Reichenhall and a BND officer until his suicide in 1960.

An account of the defectors known from literature, such as Hans Joachim Geyer (1951),¹² Wolfgang Paul Höher (1953)¹³ and Hans Sommer (1954)¹⁴ or former Gestapo agent Ludwig Albert (1955)¹⁵ would fill numerous volumes.

The number of uncovered moles, however, is surpassed by the number of those who fell victim to the alarmed safety department, often just because of vague speculations. The first wave of 'cleansing' occurred after the exposure of the trio of Heinz Felfe, Hans Clemens and Erwin Tiebel. Among those who carried the contact poison, Felfe, would have been particularly notable if they could look back on a secret service career in the Third Reich. To exemplify this, we can examine one case out of many.

The long-standing officer Karl-Theodor Schütz, born in 1907, was fired by the BND, allegedly because he had concealed his Gestapo career at Trier

when he was employed by the BND. He was rehabilitated by the Local Labor Court in 1966, but not employed again by the service afterwards. The actual reason for his sacking was the fact that he had had a close working relationship with Clemens, Felfe and Albert after 1952.¹⁶

The security department at Pullach has regularly engaged in so-called 'witch hunts' since then, even after the *Wende*, as the sword of Damocles of a 'second Felfe' (BND Vice President Dieter Blötz) has hung over above the BND ever since. Those of the leading ranks affected were, among others, the head of analysis, Jürgen Magnus von Alten, who came under wrongful suspicion in 1976,¹⁷ and Volker Foertsch, head of the safety department from 1994 onwards, suspected in 1997 of having been a KGB spy.¹⁸ He had already been suspected by the grapevine of the counter-espionage department at Pullach when he was 19 years old, for maintaining contact with KGB agent Gerfried Pachmann when working as an interrogator in the refugee camp Berlin-Marienfelde in 1953/1954.¹⁹ Over many years, more than 200 suspects have come into the treadmill of the counter-espionage department at Pullach, most of them being innocent. The resulting climate of suspicion has led to an increased unwillingness to take operational risks and to a breach between working groups and staff. Consequently, many case officers have got the impression that the enemy was to be found within their own ranks.

Apart from the above-mentioned, we are left with a large number of suspected cases, among them serious ones such as that of BND Vice President Horst Wendland, who committed suicide on 8 October 1968,²⁰ an alleged double agent of the Czech intelligence service, StB. The typical personal data sheet of a BND employee, Ebrulf Zuber,²¹ might illuminate a yet-unknown suspected case. His importance in our context is due to the fact that he was one of the masterminds of the BND's GDR intelligence, having served as head of Sub-department 12 (GDR) from 1981, and from 1983 until his retirement in April 1985 as Sub-department 12 leader (GDR and Soviet Bloc). According to a warning notice given by the French SDECE, Zuber had been recruited by Soviet military intelligence in the CSSR in 1945. Hence, Zuber, alias 'Ackermann', was under constant surveillance by superiors and colleagues. However, they were unable to discover the slightest hint whatsoever pointing toward 'enemy control'.

Deficiency 2

Part of the BND's second deficiency is the problem of several technical weaknesses. From the upkeep of uncovered cryptographic systems to observably high concentrations of cover addresses in certain areas to what the MfS used to call 'feature letters' and the use of case officers who worked with double agents in connection with recruitment, there occurred numerous errors within the BND leadership and communication channels that facilitated the work of MfS counter-espionage considerably.

The case of MfS defector Werner Stiller in 1979 also showed technical difficulties with the falsification of passports²² at Pullach, a dilettantism which would seal the fate of a defector as late as November 1988. When the passengers of the Berlin-Prague-Vienna train were checked at the CSSR border checkpoint of Ceske Velenice on 20 November 1988, one man's passport set the customs officers thinking. The entry stamp to the CSSR that had been added on 14 November 1988 showed a image whose lines had not been drawn straight, contrary to the correct notation. They took the passport to the customs shed to check for its luminescent codes with the help of an ultraviolet. The ordinary luminescent parts of the visa would not appear, however. Consequently, the suspect was asked to leave the train in order to clarify matters and to let it go on to Austria without him. According to the data in his passport, the man was a BRD citizen called Hans-Dieter Schulz, born on 25 July 1957 at Kassel, and resident in Düsseldorf. The traveler was subjected to an interrogation by the customs officers. He soon gave in and admitted that his documents were false. He claimed to be a GDR citizen named Sebastian P., born in July 1957 at Bernburg, resident in 2331 Preetz. P. declared to be a major of the *Nationale Volksarmee* (NVA) of the GDR attending a course at the military academy of the CSSR People's Army at Brno.

After this confession the customs officials transferred him to the military counter-intelligence of the Ministry of the Interior of the CSSR. During the following interrogations, P. claimed to disagree with the social system in the GDR and the CSSR. For this reason he had contacted a ring of people-smugglers via relatives in the Federal Republic of Germany. He had then prepared his escape with them. In further interrogations, the CSSR security

organizations focused on the question of whether P. had been planning to commit treason against the CSSR or Warsaw Pact security interests after crossing the border. P. tenaciously persisted with his story of escape, arranged by smugglers because of his dissatisfaction, and the CSSR security agencies concluded that there had not been any treasonous intentions.

CSSR military intelligence contacted GDR military intelligence (MfS Main Directorate I) in December 1988. There, the case was dealt with by the Department of External Defense. CSSR authorities provided a photocopy of the passport with a magnification of the peculiar visa entry. A comparison with copies of other false passports at hand led to the conclusion that the passport presented by P. had to be a BND forgery.

Various hints pointed in this direction. In 1986, a courier operation in connection with a BND initiation operation directed at a *Hauptverwaltung A* (HVA) officer took place, also using a visa issued by the municipality of Düsseldorf. The same visa was used in the course of a BND initiation operation against the ex-wife of former HVA spymaster, Markus Wolf, in the same year.

The second chain of evidence was due to the MfS' systematic spying on the West German passport system. The issuing authorities in the Federal Republic used to order larger amounts of passports from the Federal Press according to the respective demand—these received consecutive numbering. An interior source within the Federal Press, which was located in West Berlin, had gained access to these lists of orders. On the basis of this information, it was possible to establish the fact that the passport presented by P. belonged to a series that had not been delivered to the authorities at Düsseldorf, but had actually ended up in Hamburg.

The GDR withheld their information on the origins of P.'s passport, i.e. the workshops of the BND, from the CSSR security agencies in order to achieve a swift extradition to the judicial authorities in the GDR, which finally took place in April 1989.

In his first interrogation, P. admitted that he had made contact with the BND through West German relatives. These relatives had then traveled to the CSSR for a short period on 14 November 1988, in order to be able to

provide the BND with an entry stamp. This stamp was then copied into the false passport, obviously losing its luminescent nature. Before his attempt to escape, the BND ordered P. to take photographs of any documents he, as an NVA officer and student at the CSSR military academy, had access to. He had hidden the exposed films in pits on his mother's premises at Preetz and close to Brno as ordered. However, due to the autumn revolution of 1989, the NVA officer was never convicted. He was granted amnesty in the wake of the German reunification.

In the final chapter of GDR history, when the notorious 'wind of change' was taking the shape of a hurricane, the BND experienced a slight updraft too. From late 1988, and increasingly with the beginning of 1989, a high-ranking GDR diplomat reported to the BND on the escalating controversy between the Politbüro and Soviet leadership. For instance, in September 1989, he provided information that Moscow was using intelligence operations against the GDR, as the KGB tried to directly recruit top cadres from political and economic circles for cooperation after the opening of the Hungarian border to GDR refugees. At the beginning of October 1989, during the state visit of Mikhail Gorbachev for the GDR's fortieth anniversary, he provided the BND with details on the aggravated controversy between Moscow and East Berlin, and after the sacking of Erich Honecker, he made the assertion that his protégé, Egon Krenz, was supposed to be no more than a temporary solution, because the Soviet leadership preferred Hans Modrow, SED Regional Chairman of Dresden, and former HVA spymaster Markus Wolf as future leaders. However, the information provided by this high-ranking interior source from GDR Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer's staff hardly found any expression in the reports from Pullach forwarded to Bonn, because it was in stark contrast to the reports by the BRD's regular representative at East Berlin. Hans Otto Bräutigam always saw stable conditions in the GDR, noted in his situation reports at the BND headquarters. GDR counter-espionage was, thanks to clues from the operational area, close on their diplomat's heels, yet unable to blow his cover before the *Wende*.

Now let us return from this highlight to the overall picture of HUMINT in the latter half of the 1980s. The BND had a total of approximately 180 agents—operating against the GDR—at its disposal in this period.

According to concurrent statements by MfS general Harry Schütt and leading BND officers, about 90 percent of those were double agents of the MfS. All sources and their information flows had been closely examined at Pullach. It turned out that out of these 180 agents, only 20 were operating unrecognized by the MfS, among them two or three good interior sources. Nevertheless, the intelligence that was provided had certain significance.

On the one hand, authentic double agents made useful tokens in the game of espionage. On the other hand, the BND case officers managed to worm additional secrets out of them by pointing out that solid Deutsche mark could only be earned by providing solid facts, particularly on the economic sector.

SIGINT as a source of information must not be underestimated. First, because it is still unknown today to what extent SIGINT intelligence was provided by the partner organizations, and second, because it helps to explain the debt of gratitude of the BND to the US partner organization, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), which they tried to make up for by passing on information to the Americans in the Iraq war of 2003. Another detail from the field of SIGINT: the United States Embassy at Bonn, constructed in 1951, was American property until 1999. The loft of the building at Deichmanns Aue 29 housed the BND office WA 10 from the early 1980s onwards. Here, about 30 *Bundeswehr* and BND experts worked under the command of a colonel of Department II under the Army's executive staff. At this base, the Germans received satellite photos from the space-based reconnaissance of the NRO (National Reconnaissance Organization) via the DIA, which could then be evaluated in the INTERGRAPH-bases, never leaving American territory. The results were directly transmitted to a topsecret military evaluation group, section 33 AB, at Pullach. In order to conceal the origin of the information, the BND analysts on the second floor of block 103 were only allowed to take notes on the available material that would slip into their reports. The resolution of the obtained photographs enabled the analysts to see whether a new type of Soviet tank had already been deployed in the GDR or not, where SS-20 launch pads had been positioned, or which construction projects were carried out at East German air bases.

It remains unknown for how long this cooperation was continued after the reunification, or whether it was transferred to Berlin. Either way, BND officer Brückner, alias *Drache* (dragon) took charge of WA 10 in 1991, after the fall of the GDR.

The fact that the DIA did not just provide the BND with finished intelligence, i.e. with their own evaluations of the NRO photographs, but with the actual raw material, was a sign of confidence that had a political dimension. It was meant to demonstrate to the Germans that they did not rely exclusively on the cooperation with the French in the ‘Helios’ project in order to gain access to satellite pictures. As a consequence, the BND concealed this German-American cooperation from their French partner organization, the *Direction Renseignement Militaire* (DRM). A high-ranking DRM officer confirmed that this secrecy actually worked and that his agency had not had any idea whatsoever about the BND unit at the US embassy in 2007.

Conclusion

West German intelligence operations between 1946 and 1989 against the GDR and the Soviet forces based there were largely successful, particularly as regards the military and the economic sectors, whereas political espionage had its limitations. The major consumers of the intelligence product—the Chancellery, the Federal Foreign Office and the *Bundeswehr*—usually received the information required in order to respond adequately. However, the organization of the BND as a secret intelligence agency based on the work of spies only played a small part in this.

Notes

1 BND departments HUMINT—1974 Soviet Bloc: IB2 GDR North; IB3 GDR Center; IB4 GDR South; IC1 USSR/Poland; IC2 CSSR/Danube region; IC3 Navy; 1988 Soviet Bloc: 12 B GDR Politics, Economy, Technology, Organization and Science; 12C GDR-Southern forces; 12D GDR-Northern forces; 12E USSR, COMECON; 12F Poland; 12G CSSR, Hungary; 12H Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania.

2 Supra-regional Issues Warsaw Pact: political integration attempts 1; military doctrine and strategy, Army 1; defense policy 1; electronic warfare 1; military forces 1; COMECON integration 2; CSCE-aftermath 4; arms control 2; enemy services 2. National issues Warsaw Treaty: GDR: foreign policy/pan-German relations 1; interior affairs, structures of power 1–2; economic policy/weapons technology 2; Baltic Sea— political-military situation 2; USSR: foreign and interior affairs 1; military, military potential 1; economic policy, foreign trade 1; future technology, organization 1.

3 1—highest priority: absolutely prior-ranking of the application of means and capacities. 2—high priority: prior-ranking of the application of means and capacities. 3— priority: permanent application of means and capacities. 4—limited priority: application of means and capacities on special occasions. 5—low priority: no proactive application of capacities; forwarding of incidental information. 6—no priority: no activity of the BND; forwarding of incidental information.

4 See Karl Wilhelm Fricke, *Konzentrierte Schläge*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1998. Helmut Müller-Enbergs, Jan Wielgohs and Dieter Hoffmann (eds.), *Wer war wer in der DDR*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2006, pp. 47.

5 Hermann Kastner worked as an informer of the US intelligence agency from 1951. Afterwards he became source ‘Helwig’ with the BND. He escaped to West Germany in September 1956 and worked as a lawyer in Bonn, where he died on 4 September 1957. See Müller-Enbergs *et al* (eds.), *Wer war wer in der DDR*, p. 412.

6 See Fricke, *Konzentrierte Schläge*. See also Chapter 2 by Paul Maddrell in this volume.

7 Albert Praun, III, *Fernmeldeverbindungen*, Pullach, 1960, p. 38—top secret.

8 Cf. Heinz Felfe, *Im Dienst des Gegners*, Hamburg/Zurich: Rasch und Röhring, 1986.

9 See Richard Meier, *Geheimdienst ohne Maske*, Bergisch Gladbach: Lübbe, 1992.

10 The First Criminal Division of the Supreme Court-Martial Berlin (East) found the ‘agent of the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* of the BRD’ Wolfgang Rietig guilty of systematic military espionage against the GDR and of ‘high treason, also against other socialist states’ and sentenced him to 15 years, according to the party press, *Neues Deutschland*, edition of 23 November 1977. In the judgment, the court pointed out the

particular gravity of the crimes organized by the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* of the BRD. Under constant violation of the Transit Agreement between GDR and BRD and continuous severe abuse of the entry and visiting options generously granted by the government of the GDR, the BND as an official authority under the government of the BRD organizes systematic and extensive military espionage and other subversive crimes directed against the GDR.

Rietig had been recruited by the BND in 1970 and worked as a spy until he was arrested in April 1977. He was ransomed in November 1981.

11 Alfred Spuhler, born 1940, was with the BND from 1967 onwards, and from 1971 onwards was an executive officer at the office of the liaison-officer *BND/Bundeswehr* and partner organizations in the SIGINT sector. From 1980 onwards he was executive officer and deputy leader of Department 12AB, and was at the same time the HVA’s source, *Peter*. He was sentenced to ten years in 1991 and released from the penitentiary Straubing in November 1994, having served half of the sentence. Besides official classified documents, he gave approximately 300 hints to BND agents in the GDR. See Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit*, Part 2, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1998, p. 218.

12 Hans Joachim Geyer, author under the pseudonym Hans Troll, at the Organisation Gehlen in 1951. He was double agent ‘Grell’ of the MfS at the Gehlen Organization branch X/9592 (Berlin), and relocated to East Berlin on 29 October 1953.

13 Wolfgang Paul Höher, born 1914. From 1951 to February 1953 he was the Gehlen Organization’s chief officer, then becoming deputy leader of the sub-department West Berlin. He was allegedly abducted and taken to East

Berlin by the MfS on 13 February 1953. However, he had been working for the MfS since 1951 and was withdrawn in 1953. Afterwards he served as a witness in the East Berlin espionage trials.

14 Former SS Senior Storm Leader Hans Sommer worked at the Gehlen Organization regional administration North in Hamburg until August 1953. From 1954 onwards, he delivered around 2,200 pages of original Gehlen Organization documents, as well as 800 details on informers and cover addresses under the cover name of 'Rumland'.

15 Ludwig Albert, former Gestapo officer, worked in 1952 as a Gehlen Organization go-between in Hesse and in 1953 as executive officer of the general agency Darmstadt, then in 1955 at the Frankfurt branch of the BND. He was arrested by the security group in Bonn in September 1955. He committed suicide in the penitentiary of Bruchsal and was revealed as a KGB spy by the BND later that year.

16 Karl-Theodor Schütz, born in Mayen/Rhineland on 11 April 1907, son of a mine owner. From 1913 he attended elementary school, secondary school at Mayen, grammar school at Koblenz and Oberkassel. In 1923 he obtained his O-levels and was a member of the *Freikorps* Rhine-Ruhr until 1924. He obtained his A-levels in April 1926, and afterwards studied law and political science at the universities of Munich, Marburg, Bonn and Cologne. From 1928 to 1930 he was a member of the *Stahlhelm*, a member of the SA from 5 June 1930 until 1 October 1931, a member of the NSDAP from 1 March 1931 until 8 May 1945, a member of the SS from 1 October 1931. He had his first bar examination at the *Oberlandesgericht*, Cologne in February 1932, he was auscultator at the Magistrates' Court in Andernach and at the County Court in Koblenz, lawyer in Mayen, eliminated from judicial service due to a two-year sentence for aggravated battery, of which he served six months, then temporarily working at the employment office of Mayen. From 31 August 1934 he was a full-time aide at the *SS-Sturmbann 8/I/5 Koblenz* (5 SS Standards); from 1 October 1934 to 15 July 1935 he was a full-time aide at the *SS-Sturmbann 8/II Trier* (5 SS Standards); from 1 September 1934 to 31 March 1935 at State Police branch Trier—Gestapo (Press and Economic Department, assistant desk officer for § 175); from 1 April 1935 *Führerschule der Sicherheitspolizei* in Berlin, appointed chief

inspector on 15 December 1935, SD-Academy in Bernau, subsequently head of the counter-espionage department at the State Police station, Trier until June 1939. From June 1939 to 6 September 1939 he was head of the counter-espionage department at the Commissariat Border Control and Surveillance Saarbrücken-Ottweiler. From 7 September 1939 to 1 September 1940 he was in active military service at Poznan and Lodz with task force 2 of *Einsatzgruppe IV*. From 5 May 1940 he attended the first colonial course in Berlin, and from 8 November 1940 to 31 March 1941 the Italian colonial course at the Colonial School in Tivoli; from February 1942 on RSHA-Berlin Directorate VI Foreign Intelligence, OKW-counterintelligence Ic (Romania, Russia). From 24 August 1942 to 14 October 1942 he was engaged in active war service at Woroschilowsk, Ukraine at Hitler's headquarters 'Werwolf'; from 15 October 1942 to 13 September 1943 he was leader of counter-espionage Department N at the State Police Head Office, Trier. From 14 September 1943 to 21 September 1943 he was with the Higher SS and Police Leader in Italy (Dr. W. Harster in Bozen), and was supposed to establish an external detachment in Naples, which was dropped after it had become part of the war theater; 22 September 1943 to 4 June 1944 at the external detachment, Rome, of security police and head SD Departments IV and V; 16 July 1944 to 14 November 1944 he was leader of the task force, Forlì, of security police and SD; 9 November 1944 he was chief detective; from 15 November 1944 to 28 April 1945 head of the external detachment, Meran, of the Commander of Security Police and SD, Bozen. During this period he was treated for a heart disease at the military hospitals of Meran and Karersee, from where he escaped on foot across the Alps. From June 1945 to 12 July 1945 he was at the prisoner-of-war camp München-Fürstenfeldbruck; from 12 July 1945 to March 1950 he worked as a building worker, unskilled worker and commercial clerk under the cover of Hans Karl Schäringer (from 22 August 1945 onwards in Cologne). From 1 July 1952 he was employed at the Gehlen Organization as leader of the subdepartment Rhine-Ruhr in Düsseldorf; 1953 head of Sub-department 2976 Württemberg in Stuttgart, cover name Scherhack, V-Nr. 2978; January 1954 transferred to Unit 150 in Cologne; 1956 acceptance by and transfer to the BND and leader of branch E (cover name URAN) of Unit 24 in Cologne (operations against the Soviet embassy and trade mission); until 30 June 1964 with the BND, finally as head of department (senior executive officer) in Cologne, 1954 suspected as

a potential hostile penetrating agent by the CIA, dismissal from the BND due to alleged concealment of certain details in his CV (member of a special task force, member of Gestapo Department II), labor court trial in Munich with the following result: on 30 January 1967, a composition is accepted, his labor condition with the BND ends on 30 November 1966 and a compensation of 70,000 DEM is paid to settle all claims. He died in Cologne on 26 March 1985.

17 Jürgen Magnus von Alten, born 1923. From 1973 onwards he was head of analysis, and was suspected of being an Eastern spy due to hints provided by British and French partner organizations—he was observed for about eight months. He was suspended by the BND due to the suspicion of espionage activity against the BND on 19 May 1976. Although rehabilitated in January 1977, he was not allowed to return to service because the observation by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution had revealed that he was a regular visitor of red light districts.

18 Volker Foertsch, born 1935. From April 1985 onwards he was head of Subdepartment 12, operational reconnaissance Soviet Bloc; in 1989 head of Department 1 (*Beschaffung*) and senior executive officer in the BND, following controversies with BND President Porzner. From 1 February 1994 he was head of Department 5. He was suspected of being a KGB mole in 1997 and exculpated by the Federal Prosecutor General (GBA). Yet the *Parlamentarische Kontrollkommission* (PKK) called for his suspension from office in June 1998. In August 1998 his position was reduced to head of the BND schools, and on 1 October 1998 he left the BND voluntarily.

19 The journalist Pachmann was handled by KGB case officer Alexander D.Sacharow, who was transferred from East Berlin to the embassy at Bonn in 1965. From these facts, the BND security department construed another suspicious fact against Foertsch.

20 Horst Wendland, born 1912. From 1946 he was with the Gehlen Organization, major general and head of the administrative branch of the BND in 1961, leader of the liaison mission of the BND with the *Bundeswehr* in Munich in 1965, and from March 1967 up to his suicide on 8 October 1968, vice president of the BND.

21 Ebrulf Zuber, born 28 March 1920 at Petersburg/CSSR. NSDAP-membership code 6435101. From 1939 to 1940 *Reichsarbeitsdienst*; 1940 *SS-Junkerschule* Braunschweig; 7 July 1940 admission to the *Waffen SS-Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler*; 9 November 1943 SS-Senior Storm Leader; from 9 November 1943 at the SS-central office/ unit D (*Germanische Leitstelle*); on 22 November 1943 11th volunteer *Panzergrenadierdivision Nordland*; from 14 January 1945 he was company commander; in spring 1945 he was taken as a war captive by the Russians in the CSSR; from 2 March 1945 he was a US war captive in CIC-Camp No. 74 at Ludwigsburg. In 1946 he enter the Gehlen Organization; 7 July 1947 CIC-Camp Oberursel; 1956 transferred to the BND, cover name Ackermann, first case officer in Berlin, later head of the *BND-Beschaffungsdienststelle* in Augsburg; from July 1971 deputy leader of BND Department I *Beschaffung*; in the late 1970s head of the BND Sub-department I A (Intelligence Command); 1981 head of Sub-department 12 (GDR); 1982/1983 head of Sub-department 12 (GDR and Soviet Bloc); April 1985 saw his retirement, and he died in 2005.

22 See Werner Stiller, *Im Zentrum der Spionage*, Mainz: von Hase & Koehler, 1986. Müller-Enbergs *et al* (eds.), *Wer war wer in der DDR*, p. 982.

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Deaf, dumb, and blind

The CIA and East Germany

Benjamin B. Fischer

Introduction

Located in a copse near the southwest entrance to the Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) Original Headquarters Building is a graffiti-covered fragment of the Berlin Wall.¹ It was placed there as a memorial to America's victory in the Cold War and the CIA's role in that triumph. But few passersby stop to reflect on the fragment's ambiguous subtext. The CIA failed to anticipate the building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 or its opening in 1989, learning about the first event from radio broadcasts and the second from CNN reports. This ugly piece of steel and concrete was meant to be a monument to success, but it is also a symbol of monumental failure.

Between the rise and fall of the Wall, the CIA suffered one of the greatest defeats in intelligence history—not at the hands of the Soviet KGB, but at the hands of its East German surrogate, the *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* (Ministry for State Security or MfS), and its foreign intelligence service, the *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung* (Main Directorate Intelligence, hereafter, HVA). Together, the MfS and HVA succeeded in rendering the CIA deaf, dumb, and blind in the German Democratic Republic (GDR), a critical Cold War target. Using double agents, East German intelligence controlled virtually all of the CIA's putative East German human intelligence (HUMINT) sources, creating a blind spot in one of the most important US intelligence targets. By recruiting American spies, the HVA compromised US electronic signals intelligence (SIGINT) operations and electronic warfare measures in West Berlin targeted at Soviet and East German armed services. US intelligence was left deaf along the key sector of the Cold War's frontline, and its capabilities for monitoring military forces, detecting early indications of war, and preempting a surprise attack were seriously

degraded, if not eliminated. Bereft of genuine agents, the CIA was dumbfounded in 1989 when the East German people revolted against the last Stalinist regime in Eastern Europe, and it failed to anticipate the opening of the Berlin Wall.

Double agents: an incomplete story

The East Germans hoodwinked the CIA by recruiting double agents who pretended to spy for the CIA while remaining loyal to the MfS and HVA. CIA officials have acknowledged the basic facts of the double-agent fiasco. Former CIA deputy director Adm. Bobby Ray Inman, for example, told Congress that “most, if not all [East German] Humint agents over 20 years were double agents.”² Former CIA director Robert M. Gates put it more bluntly: “We were duped by double agents in...East Germany.”³ Milton Bearden, the last chief of the CIA’s Soviet-East European Division (SE), which was responsible for East German operations, added that “every one of the men who seemed ready to change sides turned out to be a double agent; the CIA had had no luck in recruiting even the dullest functionaries.”⁴ But there have been no more revelations. The media, which usually pounce on CIA “flaps,” ran the story without probing its implications.⁵ Then the issue simply disappeared from headlines and was forgotten. Tim Weiner of the *New York Times*, for example, recently published a 700-page account of CIA follies, foibles, and failures without a single reference to “East Germany” or “East German” in the index.⁶

The CIA’s expectation that this embarrassing story would fade away proved correct. Meanwhile, former CIA officials have engaged in damage control. Bearden, for example, dismissed the GDR as a “backwater.” He claims that SE viewed East Berlin as nothing more than a training ground for officers slated for more challenging assignments in Moscow and other Eastern bloc capitals.⁷ Inside the CIA, senior SE officers wrote off the double-agent deception as “history,” as if the past had nothing to do with the present or the future. They did so less than two years after learning that virtually all of their putative Cuban agents were doubles.⁸ And they did so, knowing that all of their Soviet agents during the final years of the Cold War were controlled by the KGB.⁹

The CIA has managed to keep the full story under wraps by refusing to declassify records in its possession from the former MfS and HVA. According to Bearden, an East German intelligence officer “looted an entire file room” and turned his booty over to the CIA.¹⁰ The Agency also acquired a second tranche of records, consisting of 17,000 index cards listing telephone numbers in West Germany and West Berlin, which the MfS monitored and which provided a “road map” to East German operations.¹¹ The CIA obtained these records amid the chaos of the GDR’s last few months. Several years later, it bought a third tranche, which had been “in KGB custody,” i.e. it evidently came from a Russian source. Those records reportedly contain “the most sensitive files” and revealed “a wealth of information” about East German operations in the West.¹²

Unless the CIA releases its East German records, an unlikely prospect, the full story will remain untold. It is almost certain that we will never learn the numbers and identities of the double agents, where they worked, where they were recruited, what information they provided, and what impact their disinformation had on US policy. Even though there may be more devils in the details, however, there is enough information available to establish the outlines and reach a preliminary damage assessment of East German double-agent operations.

Hardly a backwater

The CIA’s conceit that East Germany was a “backwater” is not valid. East Germany should have been a high-value US intelligence target. The main dividing line between the Iron Curtain countries and the Western democracies was 1,737km long, 1,381km of which ran through divided Germany. On one side was the GDR, the western-most outpost of the Soviet empire and its military alliance, the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet garrison, the Soviet Group of Forces in Germany (SGFG), accounted for 400,000 of the 500,000 USSR servicemen stationed in Eastern Europe.¹³ These were shock troops, which were kept on permanent alert and engaged in continuous military exercises either in anticipation of war or in preparation for a surprise attack. In wartime, the SGFG and its armored divisions would have spearheaded a blitzkrieg-style attack, punching through the defenses of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in West Germany. The East

German armed forces maintained six divisions, which were under Soviet command. Soviet war plans called for attacking along three fronts: across the northern German plain toward Hamburg; through the Fulda Gap in the direction of Frankfurt/Main; and along the Hof Corridor en route to Nuremberg and southern Bavaria.¹⁴ Numbers and geography favored the Warsaw Pact. The Soviet alliance had far more troops, tanks, and artillery pieces than NATO, and the West German landscape posed few natural barriers to invading forces.

NATO forces, on the other hand, were poorly positioned to defend against or halt a Warsaw Pact advance, especially across the open north German plain. Political considerations complicated matters. The West German government was reluctant to accept heavily fortified defenses along the main invasion routes for fear of making the inner-German border appear permanent and irreversible. Its policy of *Ostpolitik*, of seeking German reunification through rapprochement with the USSR and Poland, was a more important consideration.

On the western side of the Iron Curtain was the Federal Republic of Germany, America's most important Cold War ally and the most important country in the NATO alliance in terms of location, armed forces (NATO and West German) deployed there, and economic and industrial capacity.¹⁵ Three-quarters of a million foreign servicemen and their families were stationed on West German soil, along with half of a million West German troops and 400 military installations.

Whereas US intelligence had no sources inside the GDR, East Germany saturated West Germany and West Berlin with agents who spied on US, West German, and other NATO personnel and facilities. Over the course of the Cold War, East German intelligence and counter-intelligence recruited an estimated 17,000–23,000 agents in West Germany.¹⁶ By the late 1980s, the MfS, the HVA, and the *Verwaltung Aufklärung* (military intelligence service) were handling an estimated 3,000 agents in West Germany/West Berlin, about half under HVA control. Five out of every 100,000 West German citizens spied for East German intelligence, and no one in Western intelligence knew or seemed to care.¹⁷

Wolf's agents in the CIA's blickfeld (field of vision)

For all its vaunted reputation, the HVA, unlike the KGB, never recruited a mole inside the CIA.¹⁸ But Markus Wolf, the legendary spymaster who headed East German foreign intelligence for most of the Cold War, did not need moles to penetrate and compromise Agency operations; he accomplished the same goal with double agents. As two of his former officers noted:

It was difficult to operate against the CIA without inside sources. But it was not impossible. Naturally, we tried but did not succeed in placing agents in the [Agency]. Nevertheless, there was not a single CIA operation on GDR territory that we were not able to detect using the *IMB-Linien* and counter-espionage operations.¹⁹

In *Stasideutsch*, East German intelligence jargon, *IMB-Linien* referred to MfS and HVA components that ran double-agent operations.²⁰ IM stood for *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, unofficial or non-staff collaborator, i.e. agent. An IMB was an agent “in contact with the enemy or persons suspected of hostile activity,” a double agent under MfS/HVA control.²¹ In the pecking order of East German agents, IMBs were the top dogs. They were the most highly trusted and trained agents, used in high-priority “operational intelligence games” (*operative Nachrichtenspiele*) to ferret out and neutralize case officers from opposing foreign intelligence services.²² As the official MfS dictionary put it, IMBs were “the main force in the struggle with the enemy.”²³

Double-agent operations began in one of two ways. In the first scenario, the MfS and the HVA recruited East German citizens, or in some cases third-country nationals, trained them in clandestine tradecraft and role-playing, and prepped them with innocuous information that would not harm state interests or disinformation that was intended to mislead, confuse, and divert Western intelligence services. Double agents then either made contact with Western services in the expectation that a recruitment “pitch” would follow, or they simply approached those services and offered to spy. The *Stasideutsch* term for the first variant was *Blickfeldmaßnahme*, or field-of-

vision operation. The other variant was a *Selbstanbieter* operation, a self-recruiter or volunteer operation.

In the second scenario, East Germans who were caught or who confessed to spying for a foreign intelligence service were arrested and interrogated, and, if they were judged suitable candidates for double-agent operations, were offered a choice between prison or working for the MfS or HVA. The CIA always approached East Germans abroad, never in the GDR, where the massive MfS counter-espionage apparatus made contacts impossible. The majority of CIA agents recruited abroad, however, confessed to espionage upon returning home, either voluntarily or during “interviews” by the Stasi.²⁴

HVA Abteilung IX: the *Superabteilung*

In the MfS division of labor, both the internal counter-intelligence service, *Hauptverwaltung II* (Main Directorate, hereafter HA II), and the HVA’s foreign counter-intelligence unit, *Abteilung IX* (Department, hereafter Abt. IX), ran double agents against the CIA. The latter, it seems, ran the most, and certainly the most damaging, operations.²⁵ Created in 1973, Abt. IX was a late addition to Wolf’s table of organization.²⁶ Prior to that, counter-intelligence was the MfS’ exclusive domain. Abt. IX was a byproduct of the “diplomatic revolution of 1973,” when the GDR emerged from a quarter of a century of international isolation and began opening embassies and other official representations in the West.²⁷ Wolf argued that an expanded foreign presence necessitated the creation of a foreign counter-intelligence unit under his command, an argument not welcomed by the powerful chief of HA II, who believed that Wolf was poaching on his turf. After a year of wrangling, however, Wolf prevailed.²⁸

Abt. IX’s first priority was protection of GDR personnel and installations abroad from assaults by Western intelligence and security services. But its new foreign presence also provided diplomatic cover positions from which HVA officers could target the same services.²⁹ The creation of Abt. IX “laid the foundation for intensive analysis of the organization and activities of the CIA in the Federal Republic of Germany.”³⁰

Wolf's bureaucratic victory was vindicated many times over. Abt. IX achieved spectacular results, becoming a pillar of the HVA and earning a reputation as a "*Supembteilung*"³¹ Success in foreign counter-intelligence led to more success in foreign intelligence collection. Serial recruitment of moles inside Western intelligence and security services provided HVA intelligence with timely, sometimes even daily, reports on investigations and surveillance in West Germany, affording protection for its officers and agents.³²

The KGB was quick to note—and piggy-back on—Wolf's achievement. A former KGB general and counter-intelligence officer claims that the HVA "had so deeply penetrated the West German government, military, and secret services that about all we had to do was lay back and stay out of Wolf's way."³³ German authorities estimate that the HVA, by itself, produced as much as 80 percent of all Warsaw Pact intelligence on West Germany and NATO, the Soviet Union's highest priority targets.³⁴ Much of the credit belonged to HVA counter-intelligence. None of this was known during the Cold War. Wolf's service was a kind of stealth weapon that never came up on the West's radar.

The HVA became the KGB's most important liaison service and received new marching orders.³⁵ Until the late 1970s, the East European services worked under an explicit division of labor in which the KGB jealously guarded its preeminent role in targeting the CIA. Each allied service had to obtain KGB permission before developing an anti-Agency operation, and the operation had to be cleared in advance by the KGB and serve KGB interests.³⁶ By the turn of the decade, however, the division of labor was revised. The HVA was allowed to hit off its own bat. As two ex-officers report, the "HVA became increasingly engaged in targeting the US intelligence services under the sophisticated slogan 'the CIA is the main enemy [Hauptfeind], the West German intelligence services are our main target' "³⁷ Wolf explained his new hunting license by saying that the "Soviets believed that my country's forward geographic position in Europe and our immediate proximity to the American sectors of Berlin and Germany gave us certain advantages in penetrating the United States." The large US presence offered the MfS a "veritable smorgasbord of sources."³⁸ Only after the Berlin Wall had fallen and the GDR had collapsed did US

intelligence discover that the HVA had netted dozens of American servicemen, businessmen, and students in West Germany and West Berlin.³⁹ Wolf's new status in Moscow led his officers to call him the Eastern bloc's *rezident* (chief of station) for Western Europe.⁴⁰

HA II and HVA IX: from rivals to collaborators

It took some time for the MfS-HVA turf war to recede. But the two rivals reached a *modus vivendi*, and eventually their relationship improved to the point that one expert described it as a fusion or integration (*Verschmelzung*) of MfS and HVA intelligence and counter-intelligence.⁴¹ In foreign counter-intelligence operations, the HVA held all the best cards in West Germany and West Berlin due to its presence there. The HVA also benefitted from superior leadership in the person of chief Harry Schütt, who by all accounts was “the master of the game” when it came to counter-intelligence and defending his bureaucratic turf.⁴²

The HVA benefited from information shared by MfS counter-intelligence. Since the CIA found it impossible to recruit agents inside the GDR, it resorted to targeting East Germans working or traveling abroad. The MfS routinely placed persons returning home “under supervision” and grilled them. The HVA drew on interrogation reports to identify the foreign intelligence officers who had recruited them and generate other useful information, such as the recruiting services' intelligence requirements, communications methods, and other details of tradecraft that could be used to unmask more agents and operations. Despite occasional friction, the MfS and the HVA “for the most part were sitting in the same boat,” especially when it came to operations against the CIA.⁴³ The two services reached “a close and unrestricted division of labor” in targeting CIA officers in East Berlin, the MfS' domain, and in West Berlin, the HVA's turf, with the result of compromising and neutralizing Agency operations against the GDR.⁴⁴

Cooperation proceeded apace throughout the 1980s. HA II transferred some of its best agents and seconded some of its officers to Abt. IX. Formal agreements cemented the fusion process, and the MfS and HVA began routinely exchanging information and work methods (tradecraft). The high point was reached in 1985 when HA II created the *Arbeitsgruppe*

Koordinierung (Working Group for Coordination) to manage double-agent operations in conjunction with Abt. IX.⁴⁵ A key task was comparing the “feed material” (innocuous information) and disinformation used by the two units’ double agents to make sure that there was no overlap and that the data used did not reveal sensitive information.⁴⁶ In summary, the MfS and HVA were constantly reviewing and evaluating their operations to make them better, more effective, and more secure. Within two years, they were in a position to execute an “urgent upgrade” of double-agent operations.⁴⁷

Batting zero

Wolf boasted in his memoir that

By the late 1980s, we were in the enviable position of knowing that not a single CIA agent had worked in East Germany without having been turned into a double agent or working for us from the start. On our orders they were all delivering carefully selected information and disinformation to the Americans.⁴⁸

US intelligence officers have confirmed Wolf’s claim. “We were batting zero” one noted, referring to East Germany.⁴⁹ Another added that “They dangled people in front of us...[and] we wound up taking the bait.”⁵⁰

The double-agent deception had serious implications. For one thing, it meant that by controlling the Agency’s “agents,” the MfS and HVA neutralized an entire component of the SE’s operations. For another, by controlling the flow of information to the Agency, even if some of it was accurate, East German counter-intelligence ensured that the CIA knew no more and no less than what it wanted the Agency to know.⁵¹ Disinformation was used to shape the Agency’s perception of East German realities. An added benefit was tying up CIA resources with bogus agents while keeping the Americans away from genuine sources of information.

Rarely has one intelligence service so thoroughly controlled another.⁵² But the East German achievement, while significant, was not unique. From 1961 to 1987 Cuban counter-intelligence accomplished the same feat by controlling virtually all of the CIA’s putative agents.⁵³ Add to that the CIA’s

admission that from the mid-1980s to the end of the Cold War, all of the SE's Soviet agents were "frauds," i.e. double agents, who "dominated the workload in Moscow," and a picture emerges of the largest, longest, and most successful double-agent deception in the history of intelligence.⁵⁴

The consequences were disturbing. The CIA's East German cases, as well as its Cuban and Soviet operations, were not only useless, they were counterproductive. It's better to know nothing than something that is false and intended to deceive. The contrived image of GDR reality Wolf's double agents projected formed a kind of second shield around the Berlin Wall, the first invisible, the other an imposing concrete barrier against the outside world. The US government and the intelligence community would have been better off with no East German operations than with tainted operations that served as a conduit to policymakers of intelligence that was either worthless or deceptive.

Doubles spell trouble

IMBs, according to Wolf, were deployed to "throw the Americans onto false trails in their own inquiries and lead them to mistaken conclusions about our work."⁵⁵ But the double agents earned their keep by doing more than just snookering the CIA. The official MfS handbook (*Richtlinie*), states that their main task was "recognition, identification, and collection of information on officers of hostile intelligence services, as well as offensive targeting of known officers in the Operations Area" (*Operationsgebiet, Stasideutsch* for West Germany and West Berlin).⁵⁶ In other words, double agents played offense as well as defense.

Once an IMB had made contact with an American suspected of being a member of the CIA, his first job was to gather information that could be used to identify the officer's true name if, as was usually the case, that officer was using an alias. If the suspected officer was also using a cover story, then another task was to confirm that he was in fact from the CIA. The *Stasideutsch* term for such work was "*wer is wer? Arbeit*" ("who is who? work").

The first task, spotting CIA officers, was “ridiculously easy,” Wolf claimed. They “set off on a frantic round of making contacts” almost as soon as they had arrived at a new post and unpacked.⁵⁷ The HVA compiled data on officers who approached East Germans in West Germany and in other countries, including physical descriptions and the cover stories they used. In most cases, CIA officers would drop the veil on their cover stories and acknowledge their CIA affiliation, and in others they would stick to their cover even after the IMB was “recruited.” By profiling the cover stories and the questions CIA officers asked, the HVA was able to spot other officers who used similar or identical cover stories and determine what kinds of information the Agency was looking for. Such information was used to plan more double-agent operations.

Two of Wolfs former counter-intelligence analysts note that when Abt. IX was first created, identifying CIA officers was difficult. West Berlin was an easier target than West Germany. The East Germans were just next door, MfS counter-intelligence had long experience operating there, and there were agents in place who spied on Agency offices and officers. The large CIA station in West Germany, with bases scattered throughout the country, was a more difficult, but in the end, no less penetrable target. By the 1980s the HVA was able to reconstruct the station’s cover positions, internal organization, and some 90 percent of its case officers (*Führungsoffizier*), in other words, what military intelligence would call the CIA’s order of battle.⁵⁸

The former officers assert that by the end of the Cold War they had created a database with the names of some 5,000 CIA officers.⁵⁹ They further claim that they compiled extensive reports (*ausführliche Personeninformationen*) on some 800 officers.⁶⁰ The CIA bases in West Berlin and Munich were especially hard hit. The HVA held detailed files on some 100 CIA officers posted there, thanks in part to double agents, agents inside US installations that housed the bases, and monitoring of telephone conversations.⁶¹

These figures seem high, but if the East Germans succeeded in unmasking only half of the number cited, they would have dealt the CIA a serious blow. Once exposed, CIA officers were compromised for the rest of their careers. The East Germans shared information with Eastern bloc liaison

services and in some cases with third world services.⁶² If the HVA determined that a CIA officer was good at his work and might be recruiting genuine agents, it had the option of interrupting or derailing his career either by surreptitiously exposing him with a story planted in the foreign media or by tipping off an allied or friendly intelligence service to his identity.⁶³

IMBs were trained to exploit what the HVA considered to be vulnerabilities in American behavior, such as openness, garrulousness, and a penchant for making quick, if only superficial, friendships with new acquaintances. Some case officers lived their cover, but only up to a point. “Almost always,” former HVA analysts note, they would wittingly or inadvertently reveal clues or details of their private and professional lives to double agents.⁶⁴ The HVA ran a training course that prepared IMBs to elicit even the most mundane matters that might creep into a conversation, as well as how to steer chit-chat in directions that would reveal more information. The HVA found that Americans liked to talk about their hobbies and their families, and almost all case officers carried pictures of their loved ones, which they proudly displayed to their “agents.”⁶⁵ For the HVA, such details were simply data points used in combination with other information to identify CIA officers. One CIA officer, for example, mentioned the ages of his children and where his wife worked in a local library. Using information from an HVA source inside the American community, analysts were able to place a name with the officer’s face. In another case, an officer in alias mentioned that his wife was returning home to attend a funeral. A check of intercepted phone calls revealed that the wife had discussed her father’s death with a friend, thus enabling the HVA to match her name with her husband’s.

The HVA also exploited CIA officers’ efforts to establish rapport (*Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl*) with their agents, which sometimes led them to take IMBs into their confidence and indiscreetly reveal sensitive information. Trying to bond with a double agent in such cases had serious consequences; feelings of trust and loyalty ran in one direction only. In one case, a CIA case officer confided the details of an audio surveillance (bugging) operation against a Soviet naval attaché in Bonn. The same officer also mentioned his efforts to recruit a third world ambassador.⁶⁶

Another vulnerability the HVA exploited was the CIA's practice of rotating case officers between and among German-speaking posts, including Bonn, West Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, Vienna, and Geneva.⁶⁷ The East Germans and their Eastern bloc liaison services were able to concentrate on a finite group of case officers, using "diplomatic contacts," as well as double agents and surveillance operations, to gather information that was shared and used for "operational games."

A CIA officer named "Thielemann"

One CIA officer caught in the HVA's double-agent web was in a league of his own. Using two aliases, "Alfred Thielemann" and "Alex Brinkmann," he recruited 11 phony agents, more than any of his colleagues.⁶⁸ "Thielemann" was a dupe, of course, and he was also a braggart who boasted of his recruitments to some of his "agents," telling one that he had been promoted to the "rank of general." His fool-proof recruitment method, he claimed, was simple. Hang around bars and watering holes frequented by East Germans traveling or working in West Germany, where "Thielemann" was posted during several overseas assignments. Strike up a conversation with an East German and then invite him to dinner. If he ordered the most expensive item on the menu, he was venal and could be recruited. This approach may sound foolish, which it was, but the CIA took it seriously. The method was incorporated into the CIA field tradecraft course for a number of years, guaranteeing that junior officers would follow in "Thielemann's" footsteps and recruit more double agents.

East German counter-intelligence officers found "Thielemann" amusing. He accepted every double agent they sent his way, his career flourished, and they could claim some credit for his "recruitments," even though the information they fed him was worthless.⁶⁹ But they learned an important lesson as well, a lesson that had already been learned by the Cubans and undoubtedly was passed on to the KGB and other allied services: the CIA was a sucker for double agents.

"Thielemann" inadvertently provided the HVA with a windfall. After returning to CIA headquarters, he worked on SE's East German desk, where another officer named Edward Lee Howard was assigned for six weeks.

“Thielemann” regaled Howard with accounts of his “success” in recruiting “agents.” Several years later Howard defected to the Soviet Union and, during a visit to East Berlin, he gave an account of the CIA’s East German operations. The HVA was able to confirm that all of the agents Howard identified were IMBs and that the CIA had no real agents.⁷⁰

Incompetent or corrupt?

The “Thielemann” case raises the question of whether the CIA was simply incompetent, i.e. whether it could not distinguish between real and bogus agents, or whether other factors were at work. “Thielemann” not only recruited doubles on a serial basis, but received promotions and awards for doing so. CIA headquarters apparently vetted and approved his recruitments and asked for more. Add to that the fact that the “Thielemann” case was not unique. Other case officers also fell for the East German deception. Moreover, as noted above, all of the CIA’s Cuban agents, who were recruited over a period of 25 years, were doubles, as were all of its Soviet agents.

CIA efforts to cover up its recruitment of Soviet double agents were egregious. For eight years, from 1986 to 1994, the chief of the SE reports section funneled information from agents controlled by Soviet and later Russian intelligence to the White House and the Pentagon, as well as to analysts in his own organization, that he knew or strongly suspected was bogus.⁷¹ He defended himself by asserting that the reports contained some accurate as well as false information. But the recipients of those reports were never advised of their questionable origins.⁷² When called to account for his actions, the reports chief defended himself by saying that the CIA had done the same with suspect Cuban agents and their information. A retired CIA officer claimed that not a single person responsible for the Cuban travesty was fired or demoted.⁷³ Apparently, this was also the case with the Soviet and East German doubles. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the CIA wittingly recruited double agents on a systematic basis and tried to conceal its malfeasance with fraud and deceit.

The CIA’s corruption came with a cost that is not obvious to the outside observer and may not have been apparent within the Agency. As Wolf

observed in his memoir, where the Agency was once feared and respected, it “came to be seen not only as secretive and underhanded—quite normal judgments of a powerful intelligence service—but seedy, a reputation no intelligence service can afford.”⁷⁴ Such a reputation made the Agency vulnerable to manipulation and deception. It also had an impact on the CIA’s reputation within the US intelligence community, within the national security bureaucracy, and with the American people. As the CIA inspector general who investigated the SE reports scam noted, it suggested that the Agency could not be trusted.⁷⁵

Lack of integrity was not the only issue. Declining competence was another, and the two issues were connected. In a corrupt bureaucracy, the corrupt tend to dominate, and honest people either leave or sit on the sidelines. That may well have been the case with the SE. Wolf, for example, noted that “[b]y the late 1970s and early 1980s the quality of American agents [i.e. case officers] was so poor and their work so haphazard that our masters began to ask whether Washington had stopped taking East Germany seriously.” He added that “the Soviet section [SE Division] in particular... seems to have gotten by on a wing and a prayer.”⁷⁶

The CIA’s poor performance and its “seedy” reputation may even have taken a toll on the Agency’s morale. Wolf believed that one reason SE turncoat Aldrich Ames decided to spy for the KGB was his contempt for the CIA and the pattern of corruption and worthless operations he observed.⁷⁷ If so, then the Ames case can be added to the list of damage caused by double-agent operations.

The Soviets, East Germans, and Cubans shared their experience with running double agents against the CIA. East German-Cuban cooperation can, in fact, be documented. In 1983 the Cuban counter-intelligence service seconded one of its officers, Maj. Zayda Caridad Gutiérrez Pérez, to East Berlin.⁷⁸ Gutiérrez was a ten-year veteran of Cuban double-agent operations against the CIA and a specialist in disinformation. While in East Berlin he wrote a doctoral thesis under the auspices of the MfS’ in-house law school on preparing “penetration agents,” i.e. double agents, for disinformation operations against the CIA, as well as the rest of the US intelligence community.⁷⁹ A copy of the thesis was found in the files of the

HVA unit responsible for running double agents against the CIA; presumably it was used in planning operations.

More doubles troubles

Double agents can cause serious damage in unexpected ways. A case in point was East German counter-intelligence's compromise of a vitally important and very expensive CIA technical collection program in the 1980s, thanks to two double agents, one East German and the other Cuban.

Lacking human resources to monitor Soviet and East German military forces and provide indication-and-warning-of-war intelligence from inside East Germany, the Agency developed a program to covertly place seismic sensors on GDR territory.⁸⁰ The sensors were disguised as ordinary objects located near military installations and along routes that Soviet and East German forces traveled. The shoebox-size devices could distinguish between seven different classes of vehicles, such as jeeps, cars, trucks, tanks, and missile-launchers, and determine their direction of travel. The information was stored for one week at a time and reported, via satellite, in electronic burst transmissions lasting a fraction of a second. A sudden upsurge or spike in military activity would have provided advance warning of Warsaw Pact mobilization in crisis or pre-war situations. Otherwise, the silent sentinels' information bursts permitted analysts to follow the ebb and flow of troop movements and military exercises. The sensors came equipped with a warning device that activated if they were disturbed or moved.⁸¹

The sensor program was jointly managed by the US Army and the CIA. The Army chose one of its agents, a West German national, to "implace" (the technical term) the first sensor. The "agent" turned out to be an East German double agent, and he delivered the sensor to his handlers. When the sensor failed to report, the CIA insisted that its own officers be tasked to implace the rest. The sensor program required extensive training in the US and West Germany and nerves of steel for case officers selected to implant the sensors.⁸²

Apparently, the CIA succeeded where the Army had failed, but only for a time. Then the Cubans entered the picture. The CIA had issued a state-of-the-art covert communications device, designated RS-804, to a Cuban double agent. In 1985, an MfS delegation of technical experts visited Havana, where it received a demonstration of the RS-804 transmitting messages via the Navy's FLTSAT-COM communications satellite. Two years later, the Cubans paid a return visit to East Berlin, bringing along a device they had built to intercept the uplink from the RS-804 to the US satellite.⁸³ After detecting certain unspecified irregularities in the satellite transmissions, the East Germans began searching for RS-804 signals on their own territory. They found none, but they were able to locate US sensors, which, for reasons unknown, the CIA had assigned the same frequencies and satellite uplink used by the RS-804.⁸⁴

Another operation illustrates how quick and easy it was for the East Germans to bamboozle the CIA. Codenamed "Dom" (cathedral), the operation began when the MfS learned that the CIA was opening a counter-terrorism unit in its West Berlin base.⁸⁵ The MfS counter-terrorism section, HA XXII, had six Arab agents on its payroll. The agents were directed to place themselves in the base's "field of vision," and soon, thereafter, the CIA recruited all six. The double agents confirmed that the CIA was not targeting East Germans, but was attempting to penetrate Middle Eastern terrorist groups.

Stealing the US intelligent community's crown jewels

As harmful as the HVA's double-agent operations were, they pale in comparison to Wolf's assault on US SIGINT collection programs. Abt. IX recruited three agents, "Ronny," "Kid," and "Optik," who were among the most damaging American spies of the Cold War. "Ronny" was James W. Hall III; "Kid" was Jeffrey Carney; and "Optik" has never been identified.⁸⁶ Hall was a sergeant in the US Army and Jeffrey Carney held the same rank in the US Air Force. Both were specialists in SIGINT operations designed to collect intelligence on the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact and provide early warning of war. Both had access to plans for US electronic warfare measures.

SIGINT collection programs were the crown jewels of the US intelligence community. They embodied America's comparative advantage over the Eastern bloc in technology and engineering and served as a surrogate for the CIA's perennial deficit of HUMINT sources. SIGINT not only yielded critically important information, but was also the first line of defense against a Warsaw Pact surprise attack.

From 1983 to 1988, Hall worked at two intercept sites in West Berlin and Frankfurt, staffed by Army intelligence and operated by the National Security Agency (NSA), America's foremost SIGINT service.⁸⁷ While stationed in West Berlin, Hall contacted the KGB, volunteered to spy, and was recruited. Soon thereafter, he approached a Turkish national, an auto mechanic employed at a repair shop for GIs stationed at the Army's Andrews Barracks, and expressed his interest in selling information.⁸⁸ The Turk recruited Hall; he convinced the 25-year-old buck sergeant that he was working for Turkish intelligence. In fact, this was a "false flag operation;" the Turk was an HVA agent. For two years, Hall was a double-dipper, selling vital secrets to the KGB and the HVA before the two services compared notes and concluded they were paying twice for the same information. Summoned to Vienna where he found the KGB and HVA waiting for him, Hall was given a choice to work for one or the other. He opted for the East Germans.

Hall's first assignment was the NSA's Field Station Berlin (FSB), the premier US SIGINT site during the Cold War. Located in the divided city's Grunewald district in the British sector and manned jointly with British intelligence, FSB was perched atop an artificial mound built from the rubble of bombed-out Berlin and was known as the Teufelsberg (Devil's Hill).⁸⁹ From its 115-meter-high, 360-degree vantage point in "enemy territory" inside the GDR, FSB eavesdropped on Warsaw Pact forces as far as 300 miles away. A staff of 1,300 operations officers, technicians, linguists, analysts, and support staff, not including the British contingent, worked 24/7 from a target list that included Warsaw Pact command-and-control centers and field communications, troop movements, maneuvers, and strategic exercises that revealed how the Soviets and their allies would mobilize and go to war.

During the five years he spied, Hall ransacked his two duty stations, first at FSB and then in Frankfurt, where he was reassigned to the 302nd Military Intelligence Battalion of the US Army's V Corps.⁹⁰ According to Wolf, Hall's purloined top-secret and codeword documents were a "gold mine" of information.⁹¹ Hall, he claimed, "helped our service cripple American electronic surveillance of Eastern Europe for six years."⁹² Hall's total compensation was \$300,000.⁹³ He compromised intelligence programs that cost millions of dollars to create and operate.

HVA analysts who surveyed Hall's booty claim that it took their breath away, and then he handed over a document that "gave us goose bumps [*Gänsehaut*]."⁹⁴ Only 47 pages long and codenamed Canopy Wing, it was a study of how the US could use electronic warfare measures to jam the Soviet general staff's high-frequency command-and-control communications system used to issue orders to its strategic missile forces and missile-carrying submarines, as well as its Warsaw Pact allies. If used in wartime, Canopy Wing would have left the Soviet Union defenseless and directionless, since land- and ocean-based missiles were its deterrent against a nuclear attack, and the national armies of the Warsaw Pact would have come under Soviet command. State security minister Erich Mielke was so proud of the HVA acquisition that he presented a copy to the KGB during a ceremony in Moscow.⁹⁵

Canopy Wing was a defensive measure designed to "decapitate" the Soviet high command if there were indications of an impending nuclear attack or in the event of an attack against NATO with non-nuclear forces. Seen from Moscow, it looked like an effort to render the Warsaw Pact defenseless in preparation for a surprise attack and contributed to a Soviet war scare in the 1980s.⁹⁶ The Canopy Wing plan called for a total investment of \$14.5 million in infrastructure, operations, and maintenance, and a staff of 1,570 persons.⁹⁷ According to Wolf, "Once we passed this on to the Soviets, they were able to install scrambling devices and other countermeasures."⁹⁸

The HVA considered Hall a once-in-a-lifetime recruitment—until Carney showed up. Carney had a similar job to Hall. He was assigned to the US Air Force's 6912th Electronic Security Group of the Electronic Security Command headquartered at West Berlin's Tempelhof Main Airport, and he

served as a German linguist and intelligence analyst at its Marienfelde Field site.” Personal problems led Carney to seek asylum in East Germany, but the HVA “turned him around” and persuaded him to earn his passage by returning to his duty station to “work in place.”¹⁰⁰ Six months after he began spying, Carney was transferred to a US Air Force base in Texas, but he continued meeting East German case officers in Mexico City. Then he panicked and defected to East Berlin via Mexico.

From Carney the East Germans learned of an NSA capability to pinpoint Warsaw Pact targets slated for destruction within minutes of a Soviet-led attack. Carney also revealed an NSA capability to intercept ground-to-air communications from a Soviet air base located in Eberswalde, about 30 miles northeast of Berlin. He was part of a team that worked on measures to substitute false for genuine ground-control commands in order to misdirect Soviet pilots to bomb their own troops and military bases. All of this seemed like “science fiction” to Wolf, whose expertise was in more traditional intelligence operations, but his technical experts advised him that the American plan was feasible.¹⁰¹

The only good news for the American side in this story is that Hall and Carney were both caught and sentenced to long prison terms.¹⁰² The third known agent, “Optik,” remains free, as perhaps do others who were never identified.

The HVA assault on US SIGINT capabilities illustrates the asymmetry in how the United States and East Germany waged the spy battles of the Cold War. Relying on human agents, the HVA was able to penetrate and compromise hi-tech operations whose costs ran into billions of dollars and whose value to US national security was inestimable. The CIA, however, with no agents inside the MfS or the HVA, never even knew that the East Germans ran one of the largest and most effective SIGINT programs the world has ever seen.¹⁰³ HUMINT and good counter-intelligence trumped US SIGINT worth many millions at a cost of a few hundred-thousand dollars.

Targeting the East Berlin station

The CIA did not open a field station in East Berlin until 1973, when the establishment of US-East German diplomatic relations first provided official cover positions for a US intelligence presence. The station fell within the bureaucratic purview of HA II, but the HVA benefited from information the MfS acquired and shared with it.

One of the CIA's conceits was the belief that the MfS "didn't follow CIA officers as diligently as did the KGB."¹⁰⁴ CIA officers and the station itself, however, were under MfS' microscope at all times. The Stasi *practiced fläckendeckende Überwachung*, an inelegant and untranslatable *Stasideutsch* term that means something like total surveillance, against the entire East German population, as well as all foreigners and foreign installations. HVA counter-intelligence experts assert that CIA officers were monitored 24/7 on the street so that "nothing happened that was not supposed to happen."¹⁰⁵ Even in the privacy of their apartments, officers remained under the Stasi's "eyes" and "ears." Hidden microphones and video cameras monitored every conversation and movement. Telephones were tapped, and in some cases, sensors embedded in carpets detected movement from one room to another.

Such heavy surveillance was hardly necessary, since the East Berlin station's "agents" were all doubles. Keeping the CIA in constant view, however, paid off by exposing the Agency's special tradecraft taught in its elite internal operations course and used in "denied areas" behind the Iron Curtain.¹⁰⁶ Drawing on MfS surveillance reports, HVA counter-intelligence was able, over time, to analyze CIA tradecraft and agent communications methods. Former HVA experts on the CIA report that this information helped the HVA plan and conduct operations against the CIA base in West Berlin.¹⁰⁷

The MfS' up-close-and-personal study of the CIA began with the first chief of station (COS).¹⁰⁸ Video surveillance recorded the COS and his wife as they prepared for agent meetings. The couple donned native clothing, wigs, and other "frippery" (*Firle Fanz*), thinking that they could escape detection when in fact they were under constant physical and technical surveillance. An MfS observation team knew where they were headed, since the "agents" were already under their control. By following the couple as the wife drove

her husband to the meeting site, the team was able to observe their efforts to detect and elude surveillance. Surveillance detection and operational disguises were the key elements in “denied-area” tradecraft, the thin edge between being able and not being able to run operations behind the Iron Curtain. In East Germany, at least, it was all for naught.

Missing the revolution

The CIA’s deficit of agents, as well as the false image of GDR realities created by double agents, left them ill-prepared to anticipate the most significant international event of 1989, the East Germans’ popular revolution and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Groups of dissidents began meeting in churches and coffee houses in summer 1989 to discuss limited demands for political change and freedom to travel. By the fall, those groups had turned into a groundswell of open opposition, demanding not only freedom to travel but also free elections, official recognition by the government, and the dissolution of the Stasi. Between late October and early November, more than one million people marched in hundreds of demonstrations. Meanwhile, hundreds of East Germans, many of them young and well educated, began seeking refuge in GDR embassies in Budapest and Prague as waystations to the West.

The CIA was clueless, not realizing that a genuine popular revolt was underway. There were no agents and they had no secret information. “East Germany’s counter-intelligence had done its job well; it had deprived the CIA of access to the political hierarchy of the government,” noted the CIA official in charge of East German operations.¹⁰⁹ “Something was about to explode in East Germany, but nobody at Langley or across the river in Washington had a clue what it was,” he added.¹¹⁰ The CIA, like the rest of the world, watched CNN and other news programs, trying to figure out what the people in the streets of East Germany’s major cities already knew—the GDR was collapsing and the Stasi was powerless to stop it.

Amid the chaos and confusion, the MfS even managed to run one more double agent against the station. A member of the surveillance team that targeted the station, whom the station nicknamed “Curly,” began parking his car over-night near the COS’ residence.¹¹¹ The CIA man misread this

rather transparent act as an indication that “Curly” was signaling his readiness to spy. “I looked into his eyes,” a station officer cabled CIA headquarters, “and I realized that he was good.”¹¹² “Curly” received a “lucrative offer” and appeared for several “clandestine” meetings in West Berlin before the station concluded it had been snookered. “Curly” was a double. Looking into his eyes had proved to be a poor way to vet him.

With the GDR in shambles and the MfS and HVA defanged, the CIA tried and failed to recruit senior officers, offering payments of \$1 million or more. The Agency even tried to recruit Markus Wolf, who rejected the pitch, insulted by the CIA’s treating him like “some two-bit agent... [it] could buy and sell.”¹¹³ Finally, Wolf’s successor, Werner Großmann, stepped in and warned the CIA’s COS to stop harassing his officers or he would go to the police and the media.¹¹⁴ The COS was dumbfounded. Facing unemployment, loss of pensions, and possibly prosecution, HVA officers clung to their pride and refused to betray their agents. The Agency could not believe that bags full of dollars could not buy their cooperation.

A final word

The generation of CIA officers who rose through the ranks of the SE in the 1970s assumed leadership positions during the next decade. Most were “middle” Americans; they came from the Midwest, from the middle class, and from middle-rank state colleges and universities. They believed they were smarter, better trained, and more experienced than their predecessors, most of whom came from the Ivy League and Wall Street. Most of all, they considered themselves “street-smart” and more able to go toe-to-toe with the KGB and its allied services. All too cavalierly, they dismissed their opponents as “hoods” and “thugs.”¹¹⁵ Where the privileged Ivy Leaguers had repeatedly failed, the successor generation was determined to succeed.¹¹⁶

In the end, however, the new generation fell victim to its own hubris. The East Germans, as well as the Soviets, ran circles around SE, neutralizing its operations and tying it up in knots with double agents who fed it disinformation. SE’s one claim to success, the recruitment of Soviet agents in the early 1980s, was unraveled after the KGB recruited Howard and

Ames. Only after the Cold War ended did it become clear that the Soviets and their surrogates had achieved the CIA's ultimate nightmare by penetrating the SE with moles and double agents. The successor generation not only racked up more failures and a higher body count of dead agents than their predecessors, they also failed on a scale unprecedented in the history of intelligence. This was more than a failure; it was a dereliction of duty.

Did SE officers and managers know what was happening? The evidence suggests that some were fools but most were knaves. They covered up their failure by fraud and deceit, continuing to recruit double agents and disseminating a steady stream of tainted intelligence reports to their "consumers." By so doing, they compromised the intelligence process, their agency, and finally themselves.

Notes

1 The CIA Headquarters Building, which opened in 1963, was renamed Original Headquarters after a second building, designated New Headquarters Building, was completed in 1988.

2 Adm. Bobby Ray Inman (19 November 1996) "Testimony of Bob Inman, Hearings of the Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the United States Intelligence Community," Washington, DC: US Congress. www.fas.org/irp/commission/testinma.htm.

3 Robert Gates (19 November 1999) "Remarks of Former DCI Robert Gates to the CIA Conference 'US Intelligence and the End of the Cold War,' Texas A&M University," Washington, DC: CIA. www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/1999/dci_speech_111999gatesremarks.html.

4 Milton Bearden and James Risen, *The Main Enemy: The CIA's Battle with the Soviet Union*, London: Century, 2003, p. 386. After the Cold War, the SE was renamed Central Eurasia Division.

5 See, for example, Bill Gertz, "Stasi files reveal CIA two-timers," *Washington Times*, 9 December 1991, p. A1; and John Wolcott and Brian

Duffy, "The CIA's Darkest Secrets," *U.S. News and World Report*, 4 July 1994, pp. 37–38.

6 Tim Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA*, New York: Doubleday, 2007.

7 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 386.

8 Ernest Volkman, *Espionage: The Greatest Spy Operations of the 20th Century*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1995, pp. 16–25, *passim*.

9 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 306.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 437.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 438. The authors state that the index cards were logs of MfS "telephone wiretaps," but that is incorrect. The MfS did not tap phones; it intercepted West German microwave and directional radio signals from intercept sites on its own territory. See Benjamin B. Fischer, "'One of the Biggest Ears in the World': East German Sigint Operations," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 11:2 (Spring 1998), p. 145; and Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 262–273, *passim*.

12 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 438. The authors refer to the third tranche as "Stasi files," but this is a double misnomer. The records in question were from the HVA, not the MfS, which the sobriquet Stasi refers to. Furthermore, they were not files but index cards used as finding aids for accessing hard-copy files in the HVA archives. With a few minor exceptions, the HVA destroyed all of its files during the first half of 1990.

13 The SGFG comprised 777 barracks, 276 bases, 47 airfields, and 116 exercise areas and was the primary land-based conventional forces threat to NATO forces. In June 1989, it was renamed Western Group of Forces as the USSR shifted from an offensive to a defensive strategy vis-à-vis NATO and began withdrawing troops and armaments. The withdrawal was completed in 1993. See Wikipedia (21 April 2008), "Group of Soviet Forces in

Germany.”

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_of_Soviet_Forces_in_Germany.

14 See the graphics in Lawrence Freedman, *The Cold War*, London: Cassell & Co., 2001, pp. 136–137.

15 Hugh Faringdon, *Strategic Geography: NATO, the Warsaw Pact, and the Superpowers*, London and New York: Routledge, 1987, p. 258.

16 Georg Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage: Eine analytische Studie*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007, p. 70.

17 Ibid., p. 82.

18 Two former HVA officers note that “the spectacular successes of the HVA, which the media often exaggerate, reinforced its reputation as a nearly perfect and efficient intelligence service.” Peter Richter and Klaus Rösler, *Wolfs West-Spione: Ein Insider-Report*, Berlin: Elefanten Press Verlag GmbH, 1992, p. 55. For an insider account that claims the HVA’s reputation was overrated, see Günter Bohnsack, *Die Legende Stirbt: Das Ende Wolfs Geheimdienst*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 1997.

19 Klaus Eichner and Andreas Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany: Die USAGeheimdienste in Deutschland*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 1997, p. 103.

20 The MfS had its own vocabulary, which was so extensive that it filled more than 500 pages of an in-house dictionary. See Siegfried Suckut, ed., *Die Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit: Definitionen zur «politisch-operativen Arbeit»*, Berlin: Christopher Links Verlag, 1996.

21 HVA sources use two different but quite similar definitions for IMB. One is *Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter der Abwehr mit Feindverbindung bzw. Zur unmittelbaren Bearbeitung im Verdacht Feindtätigkeit stehenden Personen*, or unofficial collaborator of the counter-intelligence service in contact with the enemy or in direct targeting of persons suspected of hostile activity. The other is *Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter mit Feindberührung* or unofficial collaborator with enemy contact. See Suckut, *Die Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit*, pp. 196–197, 466.

22 Klaus Eichner, “Aufklärung und Abwehr der CIA,” in Klaus Eichner and Gotthold Schramm, eds., *Hauptverwaltung A: Geschichte, Aufgaben, Einsichten*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 2008, p. 238.

23 Suckut, *Die Wörterbuch der Staatssicherheit*, p. 196.

24 Eichner, “Aufklärung und Abwehr der CIA,” p. 238.

25 Double-agent operations fell under HVA IX/A/3, which referred to Area (*Bereich*) A (foreign intelligence services) and Branch (*Referat*) 3. Branch 3 targeted British, French, and Israeli intelligence and “especially the CIA.” Helmut Müller-Enbergs, ed., *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit, Teil 2: Anleitungen für die Arbeit mit Agenten, Kundschafter und Spionen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 2nd edn., Berlin: Christopher Links Verlag, 1998, pp. 217, 218.

26 Abt. IX was created by Order (*Befehl*) Nr. 14/73, May 1973 and consisted of three major components: IX/A (illegals); IX/B (security of foreign installations); and IX/C (evaluation and analysis). Eichner, “Aufklärung und Abwehr der CIA,” p. 233.

27 Before 1972 the GDR maintained official relations only with other Communist and some third world countries. In 1955, West Germany proclaimed the so-called Hallstein Doctrine, which held that it was the only legitimate German government and that it would not officially recognize any country with diplomatic relations with the GDR. The Doctrine achieved its purpose of isolating the GDR. The flowering of Bonn’s *Ostpolitik* in the late 1960s and early 1970s, culminating in treaties with the USSR and Poland and de facto recognition of the GDR, was in effect a diplomatic revolution that opened the way for East Berlin to expand its foreign presence, including the opening of an embassy in Washington and an official “representation” (not an embassy) in Bonn.

28 Bohnsack, *Die Legende Stirbt*, p. 80.

29 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 74.

30 Ibid., p. 112.

31 Richter and Rösler, *Wolfs West-Spione*, p. 70; and Bohnsack, *Die Legende Stirbt*, p. 80.

32 Ibid., p. 76.

33 Oleg Kalugin with Fen Montaigne, *The First Directorate: My 32 Years in Intelligence and Espionage Against the West*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994, p. 171.

34 "Die Gussen kommen," *Der Spiegel*, 16 March 1992, p. 129.

35 The KGB *rezidentura* (field station) in the East Berlin suburb of Karlshorst was the largest in the world and produced as much intelligence as a single main directorate at KGB headquarters.

36 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 74.

37 Richter and Rösler, *Wolfs West-Spione*, p. 55.

38 Markus Wolf with Anne McElvoy, *Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism's Greatest Spymaster*, New York: Times Books/Random House, 1997, pp. 292–293.

39 Jamie Dettmer, "Stasi lured Americans to spy for E. Germany," *Washington Times*, 14 November 1994, p. A1.

40 Bohnsack, *Die Legende Stirbt*, p. 60.

41 This is the general theme of Hubertus Knabe, *West Arbeit des MfS: das Zusammenspiel von «Aufklärung» und «Abwehr»*, Berlin: Christopher Links Verlag, 1999. See especially Knabe's chapter "'Einheit von Aufklärung und Abwehr'—die achtziger Jahre," pp. 101–117; and Hanna Labrenz-Weiß, "Bearbeitung von Geheimdiensten, Korrespondenten und anderen 'feindlichen Zentren'," pp. 183–204.

42 Richter and Rösler, *Wolfs West-Spione*, p. 70. For a profile of Schütt and his successes, see John Marks, "The Spymaster Unmasked," *U.S. News and World Report*, 12 April 1993, pp. 39–4.

43 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, pp. 101, 133–134.

44 Eichner, “Aufklärung und Abwehr der CIA,” p. 239.

45 Knabe *et al.*, *West Arbeit des MfS*, p. 194.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 285.

49 Marks, “The Spymaster Unmasked,” p. 41.

50 Ibid., p. 45. “Dangle” is the CIA term for a double-agent operation, a counterpart to the East German term “field of vision operation.”

51 According to Klaus Eichner, sometimes double agents had to pass secret information to the CIA in order to establish their bona fides and keep the deception going. The trick, he claims, was to give up less sensitive data in order to acquire more valuable information in return. Marks, “The Spymaster Unmasked,” pp. 45–46.

52 One historical precedent is British intelligence’s Double Cross operation during World War II, when German spies landing in the United Kingdom were caught and “doubled back” against the Nazi Abwehr.

53 See note 8, above.

54 See note 9, above.

55 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 284.

56 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 103.

57 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 284.

58 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 109. See also “Präsenz der CIA in Deutschland,” pp. 88–100; “Wir und die CIA,” pp. 103–111; and

“CIA-Operationen,” pp. 111–124. The HVA was also able to identify the much larger and more complex order of battle for US military intelligence in West Germany and West Berlin.

59 Ibid., p. 274.

60 Eichner, “Aufklärung und Abwehr der CIA,” p. 240.

61 Ibid., p. 235.

62 From 1980 the Eastern bloc services were required to submit counter-espionage and counter-terrorism information to the KGB for entry into an electronic database, SOUD, an acronym for System for Operational and Institutional Data. The HVA was a primary contributor, but also practiced “source protection” (*Quellenschutz*) by not identifying its agents by name. Ibid., pp. 254–255.

63 Marks, “The Spymaster Unmasked,” pp. 44–45.

64 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 110.

65 Ibid., p. 121.

66 Ibid., p. 122.

67 Eichner, “Aufklärung und Abwehr der CIA,” p. 240.

68 For details, see *ibid.*, pp. 112–114; Marks, “The Spymaster Unmasked,” p. 45; and Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, pp. 283–285.

69 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 114.

70 Ibid., pp. 133, 135.

71 Walter Pincus, “CIA Passed Bogus News to Presidents,” *Washington Post*, 31 October 1995, p. A1; Tim Weiner, “C.I.A. Admits Failing to Sift Tainted Data,” *New York Times*, 1 November 1995, p. A; “The C.I.A.’s False Intelligence,” *New York Times*, 2 November 1995, p. A14; and Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 450.

72 Walter Pincus, "Pentagon Was Not Told of CIA Debate on Data," *Washington Post*, 3 November 1995, p. A26. Some bogus information was included in highly restricted "blue border" reports restricted to the president, vice-president, national security adviser, secretaries of state and defense, and other top officials.

73 Walcott and Duffy, "The CIA's Darkest Secrets," p. 46.

74 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 283.

75 Weiner, *Legacy of Ashes*, p. 450.

76 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 283.

77 Ibid.

78 Jorge Luis Vazquez (13 September 2007) "La analista del DGCI, la Stasi y los Topos: Aspectos de la Colobaracion STASI-MINIT."

www.baracutecubano.blogspot.com/2007/09/la-analista-del-dgci-la-stasi-y-los.html.

79 The dissertation's title was "Die Qualifizierung der politisch-operativen Arbeit gegen die Geheimdienste der USA durch Informationstätigkeit der Penetrationsagenten." Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit*, p. 219, n930.

80 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, pp. 386–387; and Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, pp. 227–228.

81 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, pp. 251–252. See also Jeffrey T. Richelson, *The Wizards of Langley: Inside the CIA's Directorate of Science and Technology*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001, p. 242; and Eichner, "Aufklärung und Abwehr der CIA," p. 254.

82 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, pp. 386–387.

83 Jorge Luis Vázquez (5 February 2008), "El Minit y la "Lucha Electrónica." <http://secretoscuba.cultureforum.net/Información-General-c3/Secretos-de-Cuba-f/Colaboración-Stasi-Minit-T-2459>.

84 Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, pp. 277–278.

85 John O.Koehler, *Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, pp. 333–334.

86 Carney changed his name to Jens Karney after defecting to the GDR.

87 Stuart A.Herrington, *Traitors Among Us: Inside the Spycatcher's World*, Novato: Presidio, 1999, pp. 319–321.

88 The Hall case is recounted in Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, pp. 294–298; Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, pp. 227–245; Herrington, *Traitors Among Us*, pp. 249–372; and Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, pp. 95–97, 102–111. See also Wikipedia (21 May 2008), “James W.Hall III.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Hall_III.

89 See Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 225.

90 In 1985 Hall was reassigned to a US duty station in the US before transferring to Frankfurt in 1986.

91 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 295.

92 Ibid., pp. 295–296.

93 Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, p. 107.

94 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 244. See also, Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, p. 106.

95 Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, p. 106.

96 See Benjamin B.Fischer, “The Soviet-American War Scare of the 1980s,” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* 19:3 (Fall 2006), pp. 450–518.

97 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 244 and Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, p. 106.

98 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 296.

99 The Electronic Security Command worked for the National Security Agency.

100 Carney's espionage is recounted in Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, pp. 295–296; Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, pp. 296–298; and Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, pp. 94–102. See also Wikipedia (7 June 2008), "Jeffrey Carney." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeffrery_Carney.

101 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 297.

102 Hall was sentenced to 40 years and remains in prison. Carney received a 38-year sentence but was released after serving 11 years.

103 See Fischer, "One of the Biggest Ears in the World," pp. 142–153.

104 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 385.

105 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 104.

106 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 5.

107 Eichner and Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany*, p. 104.

108 Ibid., p. 125.

109 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 397.

110 Ibid., p. 393.

111 Ibid., pp. 387–389, 394.

112 Ibid., p. 389.

113 Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 13.

114 Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, pp. 439–440; and Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, p. 76.

115 See Bearden and Risen, *The Main Enemy*, pp. 415, 440.

116 Ibid., pp. 20–25, passim.

5

Rosenholz

Mischa's files, CIA's booty

Robert Gerald Livingston

Reposing in Germany's Agency for the Files of the Former German Democratic Republic's (GDR) State Security Service (*Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik* or BStU) are 381 CD-ROMs. The first two of these are misspellingly emblazoned "Rosenholtz" by the United States' Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), under whose supervision the discs were produced and who returned them to Germany between 2000 and 2003. The discs are copies of a body of files—index cards microfilmed between 1973 and 1989 by the central archive of the GDR's Ministry of State Security (known by the abbreviation MfS and popularly called the Stasi by East Germans) for the Ministry's Main Directorate for Intelligence (*Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung* or HVA), its foreign espionage service.

The collection has come to be known as Rosenholz (Rosewood) after a code-word assigned by Germany's counter-intelligence service, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* or BfV), to its operation in 1993 to gain access to and examine the cards in the files, which were being held by the CIA. This chapter describes Rosenholz, tries to determine why, how, and when the CIA obtained the files, discusses their value, and concludes with observations about HVA operations that they reveal.

Origins

In 1973 Department (*Abteilung*) XII of the MfS, its central archive, began to microfilm three sets of HVA files: F-16 cards, which carry true names of persons in whom the HVA had some kind of interest; F-22 cards, which carry an entry with a cover name (*Deckname*); and Statistical Sheets

(*Statistikbögen*), with agents' personal data, such as age, employment, and access.¹ Until the late 1970s, the HVA also microfilmed the cards—after that only the central archive did so.

The first photographed cards date back to October 1951. Additions to the files were photographed continuously thereafter. New microfilming of the entire set of files was carried out at least three times before the end of the GDR in 1990—in 1973, the early 1980s, and 1988. The 16mm film spools were kept in 160 small, waterproof, steel canisters; one set was taken to the HVA's wartime emergency bunker, built deep under the sandy soil of the Brandenburg woods at Gosen, south of Berlin. Markus (Mischa) Wolf, head of the HVA from 1952 until his retirement in 1986, reports that microfilming was stepped up in the early 1980s. The Soviet espionage services began at that time to fear a nuclear strike by the United States, a war scare that intensified until 1983 and lasted until at least 1985, when the HVA's bunker was completed. Some historians have characterized the scare as the most dangerous moment of the Cold War after the Cuba missile crisis of 1962.²

Wolf stresses that he was determined to resist the demands of his MfS superior, Erich Mielke, the minister, that he provide a single index of agents. He was “proud,” he writes, “that under my tenure, nowhere in my [main] directorate [the HVA] did there exist a single record of all our spies. I was determined that no one card index or computer disc should ever hold all our operational details.” His concerns are reflected in the three-fold compartmentalization of the HVA card files of Rosenholz, which make it necessary to have in hand three separate cards to identify an agent and in which the actual agents “could in no way be differentiated from the tens of thousands of other persons who at sometime or other came into our view.”³ Wolf entrusted organization of this system to an archivist of his directorate.⁴

F-16s, F-22s, Statistical Sheets, and SIRA

The Rosenholz card files, returned by the CIA to the BStU, end at 8 January 1988. They constitute what appears to be an almost complete set of the F-16s, the F-22s, and Statistical Sheets—on German citizens only. File cards

for the rest of 1988 and for most of 1989 were filmed but are not included in Rosenholz, having been destroyed by an HVA team in early 1990.

The F-16s consist of 293,114 cards covering about 279,327 persons, including their real names and personal data such as birth date, address, and profession, as well as the name of the HVA case officer responsible for them.⁵ As Wolf emphasizes in his autobiography, these are by no means all HVA agents, those domestic and foreign agents euphemistically designated by the MfS as its “unofficial co-workers” (*Inqffizielle Mitarbeiter* or IMs), i.e. non-staff employees, so to speak. The cards carry the names of myriad other persons: of “instructors” (*Instrukteure*), mainly East Germans of various professions who traveled to the West to contact and supervise IMs in place there (full-time HVA staff professionals in the GDR generally did not travel to the West); of couriers, recruiters, carriers of fake identity documents, renters of safe houses; of a huge number of various “contact persons” whom the HVA considered to be of some potential value in the future or whom it hoped one day to recruit; of spouses, relatives, and friends in the penumbra of such contact persons. Also on the cards were the names of persons from whom the HVA might have elicited information in conversations without the person being aware that he was speaking to a recruiter or HVA agent. Such innocents constitute the vast majority of the names carried on the F-16s.⁶

There are 57,433 F-22s in BStU hands.⁷ These provide cover names, some limited biographic information, and registration numbers. That is key, permitting specific identification of individuals by comparing registration numbers on F-16 and F-22 cards. For instance, the top, long-term HVA spy in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) staff is carried by his real name, Rainer Rupp, on his F-16 card and by his cover name, “Topas” on his F-22 and his Statistical Sheet. The F-22s carry data on various kinds of IM, ranging from recruiters to contact persons and individuals of potential HVA interest who were never IMs.

The Statistical Sheets, of which the BStU has 1,702, do not include true names, but an IM cover name and registration number along with data on age, background, employment, career, access to persons and institutions, circumstances of recruitment, and motivation for serving as an espionage

agent—what intelligence professionals term “a structural profile of an agent.”⁸

At the time of the war scare, it would seem, these cards had additions that help them serve also as a mobilization file for use in periods of international tension or even war.⁹ The cards carry roman numerals I, II or III that indicate which agents should be kept in touch with in such situations and for how long: I for those with whom contact could be broken off early in a crisis, II and III for those with whom contact should be maintained for longer. Only 179 agents fall into the third category. Evidently a microfilmed set of all three files was taken to the HVA bunker in the woods south of Berlin.¹⁰

After five years of work, a BStU technician in late 1998 succeeded in reconstructing 10,000 reel-to-reel magnetic tapes from the HVA that had by chance been found in a jumble of tapes at an East German Army research center. SIRA (*System Information und Recherche der Aufklärung*) is a gem. It covers the entire period from 1969, when the HVA obtained a large computer for its work from the West German firm Siemens, until December 1989 (while the Rosenholz materials end with January 1988). It complements, beautifully, the data in the F-16s, F-22s, and Statistical Sheets. SIRA lists summaries of informational reports, mainly supplied by HVA agents and partly by agents of other MfS units, the quality of the report as rated by HVA evaluators, and an indication of where it was passed on—for instance to the Communist Party’s Politburo or to the Soviet espionage service, the KGB. The full reports are not to be found in SIRA. Since agent registration numbers and cover names are, however, carried, SIRA provides a good picture of how productive a given agent was. SIRA has over 500,000 entries from 11,250 sources. Of these sources, 578 account for at least 100 reports each over the 20-year period, while 34 account for at least 1,000.¹¹

How many agents?

All of the MfS’ intelligence and counter-intelligence units were fixated upon West Germany, particularly Berlin, Bavaria, and Northrhine-Westphalia. BStU historians have concluded that over the life of the GDR,

that is from 1949 to 1989, some 12,000 agents there were run by the GDR's several services, half by the HVA, including its divisions in MfS branch offices in administrative districts throughout the GDR, and the other half by other divisions or departments of the MfS, mainly by counter-intelligence (Department II), and a few by military intelligence.¹² Only every third professional staff employee working for the HVA in the GDR, that is functioning as a "case officer," was actually running an agent in West Germany.¹³ At the end, in 1989, about 1,500 IMs were active there for the HVA, of which it designated 582 as "sources" (*Quellen*) delivering informational reports regularly. These figures accord fairly well with Wolf's disclosure that during the GDR's last decades "[HVA] agents numbered little more than one thousand in the Federal Republic, and little more than one tenth were important sources."¹⁴ Ninety percent of the HVA agents worked in West Germany, Wolf has said, and 98 percent of the best.¹⁵ Another 1,500 worked there for other MfS units and 138 for the GDR's armed forces military intelligence service, which operated separately from the HVA. So, a total of about 3,000 East German spies were in West Germany in 1989, though only a very few of them were top agents.¹⁶

Dissolving the HVA and destroying its files

As of 30 October 1989, the HVA, with division XV in each district branch office of the MfS, numbered 4,120 professionals (*Hauptamtliche Mitarbeiter*). In March 1990, all those still on the payroll were discharged, with 246 remaining at work until 1 July under contracts with the official Committee for Dissolution of the MfS.¹⁷

Beginning in late November 1989, East German civic activists, the citizens movement (*Bürgerbewegung*), began occupying Stasi branch offices in the GDR's district capital cities. Here they secured those branches' vast domestic intelligence files, including the cards and reports of the army of domestic IMs spying on neighbors, friends, and sometimes spouses and family members. Alarmed that something similar could happen soon at the MfS' central office in the Normannenstrasse in Berlin, and in preparation for the establishment of two new intelligence agencies (on the model of West Germany, which had two, a foreign and a domestic one), as decided by the GDR government, the HVA leadership directed in mid-December

that all the F-16 and F-22 cards relating to its agents that were being held in the central archive be pulled out, microfilmed for the HVA, and then shredded.¹⁸ This process stopped briefly when the Normannenstrasse building was, indeed, stormed and part of it occupied by civic activists on 15 January 1990. Other units of the MfS were likewise destroying their documents. MfS' Department III, which had been running a highly successful telephone, radio, and microwave tapping operation in West Germany, put thousands and thousands of intercept transcripts into huge shredders, soaked the resultant scraps in water, and then threw them into a garbage dump.¹⁹

As for the HVA, in what a civic rights leader later conceded was an act of "unsurpassed naïveté," the working group for security of the Central Roundtable of the citizens movement agreed to let it handle its own dissolution, a decision made on 23 February 1990.²⁰ Representing the HVA at the Central Roundtable initially, in mid-January 1990, was Colonel Heinz Busch, who quickly defected to the West German foreign intelligence service (*Bundesnachrichtendienst* or BND) without ever attending a roundtable session. Colonel Bernd Fischer, the HVA's representative on the Central Roundtable's working group for security, was in charge of the dissolution of the HVA as an organization, and headed a team of its officers that destroyed its files.²¹ Representatives of the Lutheran Evangelical Church and of the GDR government mediated between the HVA and the civic rights activists, and the GDR government of the time gave its approval. The HVA was able to convince the citizens' movement that it was a foreign espionage service like any other, and exposure of its agents abroad might lead Western countries to execute them. The death sentence imposed on the Soviet spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg by the United States in the early 1950s was invoked as a horrible example by the HVA officers dealing with the civic rights activists.

Destruction of the HVA operational files had begun in the MfS' Normannenstrasse headquarters in December 1989. In late March 1990, Fischer's HVA team trucked that part which had not yet been destroyed, about one-third of the total, away to an outlying HVA office, in the Roedernstrasse in Berlin-Hohenschonenhausen, where shredders ran at full capacity for about one month. Destruction encompassed all the HVA's

operational files, along with the microfilmed F-16 cards, F-22 cards, and Statistical Sheets, as well as cards indicating who had accessed these materials and SIRA magnetic tapes, including the materials that had been stored in the HVA's underground bunker south of Berlin.²² The shreds and scraps were trucked away and burned. As the BStU officially reported later,²³ "during its dissolution, the HVA, with the permission of the GDR government of the time, was able to destroy its files almost completely," which Fischer confirms.²⁴ He believes that about 99 percent of the HVA's files, that is to say not just the three Rosenholz components, but all the operational and personnel files and reports, including IM reports, were destroyed. To tweak the West German intelligence operatives, their great rivals for so long, Fischer's team deliberately left a delectable titbit behind in the archives: files on all the many BND and BfV agents detected by East German counter-intelligence.

However, Fischer's team was unaware of the existence of other microfilms of the F-16s, F-22s, and Statistical Sheets, or of other SIRA tapes.²⁵

What was the CIA doing?²⁶

In early 1990 the CIA obtained two "dumps" (to use its officers' jargon) of MfS materials. President George H.W. Bush, having caught a glimpse on television of the East German civic rights activists storming the MfS' Normannenstrasse building, expressed at his early morning briefing with the CIA's Director, William Webster, his hope that the Agency was getting its fair share of the documents. This was a rare instance of presidential interest in intelligence operations, attributable probably to Bush's background as a CIA director in the mid-1970s. The interest inevitably spurred Webster to direct his officers to step up their efforts in East Berlin. These efforts had previously been minimal.²⁷

The CIA's chief interest was in materials from the MfS' Department II, which handled counter-intelligence, with the hope of determining how much East German counter-spies had come to know about the Agency's sources in the GDR. The first dump consisted of files brought to the Agency by a defector from that unit. When they came to be examined in

Langley, the CIA's headquarters, the shock was great: all of the CIA's agents in the GDR as of 1988–1989, except conceivably one, had long been controlled by units of the MfS, chiefly Department II.²⁸ CIA officers in Berlin then tried to get in touch with key HVA officers. A prime target was Colonel Jürgen Rogalla, head of the HVA's Division XI, which was responsible for the United States and for US military bases and diplomatic establishments, as well as the US embassy and its consulates in West Germany. He was visited by the Agency's East Berlin station chief, David Rolph. Such approaches soliciting cooperation were coupled with six-figure financial enticements and offers of resettlement in the United States. When phoning from phone booths elicited few, if any, responses, the CIA began, after three or four weeks, to pay evening visits to HVA officers at home, with some success, it claimed, but evidently with low-ranking officers.²⁹

The CIA had little success recruiting higher up in the ranks, however. Rogalla was offered \$100,000 for cooperation in revealing his agents, which he refused to do.³⁰ Then, in May 1990, a retired CIA officer, the former head of its counter-intelligence, Gus Hathaway, twice called on Wolf himself with offers of recruitment and sanctuary in California, where he would not have to fear prosecution by West German justice—a solicitation that Wolf turned down and mocks in his memoirs as “massive treachery” by the Americans toward their West German allies. The emissary, who told Wolf that he came with the explicit authorization of the CIA's Director, seemed interested less in East German intelligence than in what he might learn from Wolf about Soviet intelligence and especially about a “mole” within CIA ranks (a few years later discovered to be Aldrich Ames) who had cost the Agency many agents inside the Soviet Union, and about Felix Bloch, an American diplomat suspected of having been recruited by Soviet intelligence.³¹

The second dump came in March 1990. West German counter-intelligence, the BfV, was approached by an officer working in MfS' Department II with an offer of material. However, the West German Federal Chancellery had for political reasons cautioned both of its intelligence organizations to refrain from major operations in the GDR. That state was plainly nearing collapse and reunification with the Federal Republic, a process not to be disturbed. So West German intelligence tipped off the CIA to the

opportunity. The MfS officer smuggled over 17,000 file cards out of his department, wrapped them in copies of *Neues Deutschland*, the Communist Party's daily, and stuffed them into the trunk of his car. At a rendezvous point, off the autobahn ring, south of Berlin, the cards were transferred into the trunk of an automobile carrying diplomatic license plates, driven by a junior office of the CIA's East Berlin station.³² The cards were passed on to the BfV, but the Kohl government decided to destroy them. Before doing so, the collection was offered to the CIA, presumably to give it a chance to copy those intercept cards relating to Americans' tapped phones. Later on, the CIA admitted to the German government it had photographed the entire file before giving it back to German counter-intelligence. The cards' destruction was then promptly carried out.

These cards, which identified the person targeted, the phone tapped, the date the tap had been started and, in some cases, bits of the conversations overheard, revealed a longstanding vulnerability of West Germany to the technically proficient and highly effective East German signals intelligence (SIGINT) effort. When the Kohl government learned its effort to get the cards destroyed had been thwarted by the CIA's copying of all the cards, it sent its intelligence coordinator in the Federal Chancellery, State Secretary Bernd Schmidbauer, to Washington to head off possible embarrassing revelations.

Analyzed back in Langley, the cards showed that for decades the MfS' Department III had been monitoring from sites in the GDR and Czechoslovakia—in some cases on a daily basis—the telephone, radio, and microwave transmissions coming from 25,000–40,000 phones in West Germany (although the GDR's less-than-modern computers could handle only 20,000 cases on a regular basis), including those of top politicians and civil servants, military and intelligence service officers, journalists, and business leaders.³³ Also closely monitored were the phones of the American Embassy and consulates and US army installations in the Federal Republic. The Department III officer who provided the cards confirmed that the intercept transcripts had been destroyed when the MfS was being dissolved, but he added that over the years copies of them had been routinely sent to Moscow—where they presumably are still on file today.

The booty

Surpassing these two dumps, little of which came from the HVA, was the CIA's next haul. Sometime between early and late 1992, a walk-in to the US Embassy in Warsaw, an archivist for the KGB, offered for sale spools of 35mm microfilms of the HVA F-16s, F-22s, and Statistical Sheets. Samples were sent to Langley. There, those working on the Soviet Union and its satellites had paid little heed over the years to the HVA, not considering it important compared to the CIA's main enemy, the KGB. They tended to discount the worth of the samples. Old German hands at Langley though were enthralled, pronouncing the material "fantastic." The Soviet-East European division, out of whose budget payment for the microfilmed file cards was to come, resisted paying too much. Finally a price of about \$75,000 was agreed. The most common assumption is that the HVA leadership had turned over the microfilmed Rosenholz files to the KGB, either taking them out to a liaison officer at the KGB headquarters in the GDR, in Berlin-Karlshorst, or trucking them to East Berlin's Schönefeld airport for shipment to Moscow. Some sources maintain that an HVA officer passed them directly to the CIA. The question still remains open, but the preponderance of evidence points to the Warsaw version.

This version is based on accounts from five retired CIA officers in a position to know, and three West German intelligence officials whose experience lends credibility to their assumption that this version is accurate. Skeptics suggest that the Warsaw version is a CIA-generated cover story designed to protect the real source of the Rosenholz, who was probably an HVA officer. Werner Großmann, who succeeded Markus Wolf as HVA head in 1986, considers the question open. Dealing with press stories that an HVA lieutenant colonel, Rainer Hemmann, on orders from the top of the HVA, delivered the microfilmed card files to Aleksander (Sasha) Principalov, the chief KGB liaison officer in Berlin-Karlshorst, Großmann asserts that Hemmann never received such an order and "therefore could not carry it out." Colonel Bernd Fischer is inclined to think an HVA officer sold the files to the Americans, but admits that he is not certain. Mischa Wolf expressed his doubts that Rosenholz came from an HVA officer, claiming that only five of them had access to the collection and that as of 2004 all were still alive in Germany. He argued that an HVA perpetrator

would have been punished, even murdered if his HVA colleagues had discovered his treachery or would have been given resettlement sanctuary by the CIA and thus would no longer be found in Germany.³⁴

When the CIA received the first dump, it set up a task force of about a dozen experts on Germany, a group which soon dwindled to five or six. Several members were brought out of retirement to work part-time analyzing the MfS materials, and at the end only one full-time CIA officer belonged to the group.³⁵ The group had more or less finished work on the first two dumps when the 20 canisters with the microfilmed Rosenholz card files arrived from Warsaw—probably in mid-to-late 1992.³⁶ CIA technicians judged that the microfilm spools were not originals, but perhaps a fourth or fifth copy. A CIA expert was able to develop software so that the spooled film could be transferred to individual film for each F-16, F-22, or Statistical Sheet, work that was outsourced to a private firm located on the eastern outskirts of Washington. Absolute priority for the group's examination was to identify Americans in the files, with the main hope of finding clues to the mole known to be within the CIA's ranks. Fewer than 100 names of US citizens were found in the Rosenholz files, mostly academics or individuals having had some contact with the GDR's embassy in Washington. Fewer than ten names in the files related to actual agents, IMs that is, and none to the CIA's much-sought mole.³⁷

The F-16s, F-22s, and Statistical Sheets lay completely outside the realm of experience of the working group's members. They learned to interpret them only by doing so. No former HVA or other sort of MfS employee was around to explain the file cards' abbreviations, acronyms, or registration numbers. Given the immense number of cards in the three sets, it is hard to believe that their examination could have been extensive, intensive, or rapid. Quite possibly the file cards lay around in Langley, hardly worked over once the initial search for the names of Americans in them had been completed. Interest in Rosenholz was not significant at upper CIA levels. The Cold War was long over, the GDR long gone. New priorities had been commanding the CIA's attention since the Gulf War of 1991. US policy focus had shifted toward the Middle East and terrorism following the bombing of New York's World Trade Center in 1993, as well as the proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

German counter-intelligence visits Langley

Informed by defector Heinz Busch as early as 1990 that his HVA had long been running a top-producing spy with the cover name of “Topas” within the NATO staff, the BfV had been trying hard, ever since, to identify that agent.

The BfV, after 1990, met a wall of silence when it tried to interrogate HVA officers in an effort to identify their IMs in West Germany. They feared prosecution for espionage, a fear that was not lifted—and then only partially—until a 15 May 1995 ruling by the Federal Constitutional Court that exempted from prosecution HVA officers resident in GDR, a separate state until 1990.

Receiving hints from other sources that the CIA possessed HVA materials, Schmidbauer, in the Federal Chancellery, his deputy Rudolf Dolzer, and Eckart Wertebach, head of the BfV, approached the CIA. Milt Bearden, CIA’s Bonn station chief, was authorized in March 1993 to inform the Chancellery of Rosenholz and insisted with his superiors that they make it available to the Germans. His fear, shared by German counter-intelligence, was that the KGB might well come knocking at the doors of old HVA agents in the Federal Republic to recruit them for Moscow—a reasonable concern.

After the BfV rejected a CIA effort to pass along to Bonn a sample of the microfilmed Rosenholz cards, but one resulting from sloppy re-translating into German of an English version of the cards, the CIA agreed to a BfV visit to its Langley headquarters. Dirk Dörrenberg, a BfV department chief, headed a rotating team of 3–6 employees of his service who spent a year from March 1993 on examining the microfilmed Rosenholz cards. Paul Redmond, who soon thereafter became CIA’s associate deputy director for counter-intelligence, selected the cards to be given to Dörrenberg’s team. It was given cards on Germans only, the CIA retaining for its own purposes those on non-Germans. It was not permitted to make copies of the microfilmed cards, only to take handwritten notes on them, often with the help of a magnifying glass. Time pressure was on the team because the German statute of limitations for espionage, the charge most of the HVA

agents would face in German courts, would expire in five years, that is in 1994 or 1995 at the latest. The team worked on the second floor of a house next to the post office in McLean, Virginia, close to Langley.

During its seven-month visit, Dörrenberg's team compiled 1,862 cases in the form of these handwritten copies of the Rosenholz cards, 1,494 relating to possible HVA agents (IMs) in West Germany or West Berlin, and 365 to "contact persons" there. The team prepared a report on each case for the Federal Prosecutor's Office that combined information from the Rosenholz material with evidence from other sources. The BfV's Rosenholz material was turned over to the BStU in 1995. German intelligence and the BStU concluded that the cards given to the BfV team to examine and take notes on had not been tampered with, and the handwritten copies stood up as evidence in the ensuing espionage trials in German courts.³⁸

Prosecuting HVA agents

From 1993 to 1995, 2,928 judicial inquiries (*Ermittlungsverfahren*) on espionage or treason charges were launched in Germany against West German citizens, many of them on the basis of information from the Rosenholz files.³⁹ Of these, 2,300 were dropped, 388 indictments issued, and 252 convictions obtained. Only 66 persons were sentenced to more than two years, the longest sentence being 12 years; 85 received sentences between one and two years; and the remaining convicted got less than a year, probation, or a monetary fine. Few served their full sentence.

Acquisition by the BfV of information from the Rosenholz cards led quickly to action by the Federal Criminal Office (*Bundeskriminalamt*). Arrested and soon convicted and sentenced were Rupp, the much sought-after "Topas," who received 12 years (but was released in six), Gabriele Gast ("Giesela"), who had begun working for the BND in 1968 and spying there for the HVA shortly thereafter, and who eventually rose to be its deputy director for Soviet analysis; Karl Wienand ("Streit"), deputy floor leader of the Social Democratic Party's parliamentary group and an intimate of the party's top leader, Herbert Wehner (Germany's president pardoned Wienand after two years); Klaus Kuron, a BfV desk officer; three middle-level Foreign Office diplomats; and many others. As already noted, half of

the East German agents in the Federal Republic spied for other MfS departments than the HVA, and well over half of the judicial inquiries related to them. But the HVA ran the crème de la crème, spies like Günter Guillaume (“Hansen”), who rose to be a personal assistant to chancellor Willy Brandt, and whose exposure in 1974 helped bring about Brandt’s resignation.

In comparison with Germany, the United States was draconian in sentencing convicted HVA spies, some of whom were identified through Rosenholz, but none of whom held anywhere near as important positions as some of the HVA’s IMs in the Federal Republic. Three erstwhile student radicals at the University of Wisconsin, “red diaper babies” of 1930s Leftists, were charged with espionage in October 1997 and convicted. Theresa Marie Squillacote (“Swan”), a lawyer working at a low-level Pentagon job, was sentenced to 21 years in prison, her husband Kurt Alan Strand (“Junior”), a labor organizer, to 17. Their accomplice, James Michael Clark (“Jack”), pleaded guilty and received a more lenient sentence. Although hardly important agents, according to the BStU these Americans accounted for 48 SIRA entries.⁴⁰ Rosenholz also helped uncover Jeffrey Schevitz, a young American IM for the HVA who worked at the Karlsruhe nuclear reactor in West Germany. He drew a relatively mild sentence from a German court of time already served since his arrest.

Far better agents, indeed the HVA’s most productive American IMs, whose information was highly valued by the Soviet espionage services, were two young Americans who worked for SIGINT in West Berlin and Frankfurt a/Main, James Hall and Jeffrey Carney. They passed along highly classified military documents and operating plans. Uncovered well before Rosenholz was obtained by the CIA, both drew stiff sentences. Carney, who had fled to the GDR in the 1980s, was kidnapped off a Berlin street in April 1991 by US Air Force intelligence and flown back to the United States to be tried.⁴¹

Repatriating Rosenholz

Once Dörrenberg’s BfV team had completed its work in Langley, German government interest in getting the Rosenholz card files back languished. Chancellor Kohl had made it quite clear in the early 1990s that he would

prefer to have the MfS files destroyed.⁴² His interior minister in 1990, Wolfgang Schäuble, negotiated a first draft of the unification treaty between East and West Germany that year, which provided for the files' transfer to the Federal Archives, where they presumably would not have been available for 30 years at best. The East German civic activists, whose takeover of MfS offices in late 1989 had secured the MfS' domestic IM files in the first place, objected strongly. The result of their vigorous protests, which included a hunger strike, was a Bundestag law of 21 December 1991 establishing the BStU as the repository for the files, with access for MfS victims, journalists, and historians. After 1993 the Kohl government did not seem to be pushing the Americans to get Rosenholz back. Had it really wanted to exert pressure to that end, a former CIA Bonn station chief has observed, all the Chancellery need have done was to threaten to declare the top CIA official in Germany persona non grata or to restrict the vast American SIGINT activity at many installations in the Federal Republic.⁴³

Bureaucratic turf protection in Germany counted too: the BfV, which continued to maintain contact with the CIA about Rosenholz throughout the 1990s and obtained from it additional Rosenholz information from time to time and the Federal Criminal Office, which developed its own channel to the CIA during this period, were not enthusiastic about the files going to the BStU, where, as the 1991 law required, they would be opened up.

Temptation of course existed for Kohl's Christian Democrats (CDU) to use Rosenholz for partisan ends against the Social Democratic (SPD) opposition. Pundits of the 1990s assumed that many more names associated with the SPD than with other political parties would turn up in Rosenholz. Accusations that the West German Left sympathized with the Communist east had, for decades, been a staple of the conservatives' polemics, and after going into opposition in 1982, the Social Democrats had developed close policy links to the East German Communist Party. Sure enough, a few months after the BfV's visit to Langley, leaks started in Bonn that names of prominent SPD politicians such as Wienand, Björn Engholm, Jürgen Schmude, and Karsten Voigt would be found in Rosenholz—the implication of such rumors, of course, being that they had been spying for the GDR. Rudolf Scharping, the SPD's candidate for chancellor in the 1994 elections,

accused Kohl's government in August 1993 of "to-ing-and-fro-ing" with the HVA files and demanded that the Bundestag be informed about them.⁴⁴

A leading historian of Germany thinks that "Kohl was concerned lest the United States was holding back papers that might perhaps be useful to him in incriminating his potential opponents, such as Scharping."⁴⁵ Equally possible, the Chancellor was worried that the CIA-held files, particularly the telephone intercept card copies, might contain information about his dubious efforts to secure unreported financing for his CDU party. In the years immediately after Germany's unification, moreover, he no doubt felt disinclined to pressure a United States to which he owed so much for the historical achievement over which he had presided as chancellor. The political elite of West Germany in general displayed slight interest in the return of Rosenholz, which they feared might lead to disclosures about infiltration of their political parties and compel them to contemplate their past attitudes toward the repressive, Communist GDR that had conducted such an intensive espionage operation in the Federal Republic but was now a political corpse.

To visiting German intelligence officers who inquired about return of the files, the CIA gave the standard answer of all espionage services when pressed to disclose information in their possession: "We must protect sources and methods." In cases such as Rosenholz, which had not been meticulously examined, a service's worry is that the materials may include information about the service that the service itself has not detected but that those to whom the information is passed on may—unknown unknowns, to employ a favorite phrase of former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. The CIA was well aware, too, of Rosenholz's potential for partisan use in CDU campaigning. George Tenet, who became CIA director in 1997, told a visiting German intelligence officer that return of the files was "a political matter." As such it was dealt with by the Federal Chancellery.

A congenital suspicion on the part of some German intelligence officials and many commentators on espionage doings, once Rosenholz was finally repatriated, was that the CIA had withheld some cards. Scrupulous analysis by the BStU, which carefully compared registration and other numbering

systems, has more or less put this suspicion to rest (although the cards for names from *La* to *Li* have never turned up). A second suspicion in those quarters has been that the CIA might seek to “turn” former HVA agents who appeared in Rosenholz into American agents by blackmailing or bribing them. Beginning with Zanzibar and Ghana in 1964, the HVA had developed close working relations with many African and Middle Eastern countries and with the Palestine Liberation Organization, which, Wolf writes, boosted the East Germans’ prestige with the Soviets.⁴⁶ These countries included South Yemen, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Angola, and South Africa. In some of them MfS trainers had schooled the local security forces. MfS’ Department III, responsible for SIGINT, also operated outside Europe, in countries like Nicaragua and Cuba. There, its experts had developed sophisticated systems for the locals that enabled Havana to listen in on conversations among the Cuban-American community in Miami. American intelligence sources pooh-pooh the thought of using Rosenholz as a recruiting instrument, arguing that in most African countries money had proven to be a perfectly effective tool and that since the Russians were known to have at least one copy of Rosenholz, the danger of exposure of any such “turned” IMs would have been too great.

The only people truly interested in repatriating Rosenholz were the former East German civic rights activists. Behind their interest lay a feeling of great injustice: access to the domestic MfS files held by the BStU had been granted by the 1991 law. As a result, the extensive collaboration with the MfS in the GDR had become widely known to western as well as eastern Germans. Contempt on the part of the former for the extent of the latter’s cooperation with the main institution of Communist repression during the life of the GDR was in the air. But the names of those West Germans who had collaborated as agents of the HVA and other MfS departments had not been disclosed. Those names were in the Rosenholz files held by the CIA. While East Germans living under a dictatorship felt they had little choice but to collaborate as the years went by, West Germans in the free, democratic Federal Republic faced no such pressures and so collaborated voluntarily for the most part, the civic rights activists contended. They suspected too, that the West German Left was little interested in confronting its past failure to speak out against repression of human rights in the GDR. For most of the 1990s, the Federal government found it easy to resist

pressure from the activists, who had been marginalized on the political party spectrum as early as East Germany's first free elections in March 1990 and whose moral case evoked little resonance in the western part of unified Germany. In 1998 pressure mounted though. On 9 November, the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, the activists delivered to the American Embassy a protest letter addressed to President Bill Clinton, demanding return of the Rosenholz files.⁴⁷ The Foreign Office sent a high-ranking diplomat to raise the issue with the State Department's Deputy Secretary, Strobe Talbott.

Gerhard Schröder, the SPD chancellor elected that year, made it clear that his party too, now wanted the files returned. With the danger of political controversy in Germany thus diminished, the path to repatriation was smoothed. CIA director, Tenet, was seeking to improve relationships with German intelligence for his agency's priority interest, combating terrorism. During the 1990s, the desultory talks about repatriating Rosenholz had been carried out between the Chancellery and National Security Council staffers in Washington. Ernst Uhrlau, a low-key official who had spent his previous career in intelligence and police work at the State (*Land*) level in Hamburg and Kiel and had now become responsible in Schröder's cabinet for coordinating the intelligence services, was finally able to persuade Tenet in the spring of 1999 that Rosenholz should go back to Germany. Negotiations began with Langley on how to bring this about.

They were not easy. The CIA insisted that it would return only cards relating to German citizens. Information on the cards relating to other nationalities, such as Britons, Danes, Austrians, French, Norwegians, Dutch, and others, were withheld from Germany. They constituted useful "wampum" for the CIA to present as gifts to the "liaison services" with which it worked. British names, of which there were about 100, including possibly 28 IMs, were passed during the summer of 1993 on to the United Kingdom's intelligence services, the most privileged partner of American intelligence since World War II, before the Germans got their whole trove.⁴⁸

Instead of returning microfilmed cards, the CIA contracted a large private firm experienced in handling sensitive government technology work, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) of San Diego,

which maintained a large campus near Langley, and which built special software to handle Rosenholz. That software, for which the German Interior Ministry, paid a seven-figure sum, was then used to scan prepared Rosenholz cards onto CD-ROM discs. The first of these 381 discs shipped to Germany arrived in September 2000, the rest by 2003. Besides the title on the discs, with its unnecessary *t* in Rosenholtz, the scans displayed some other minor mistakes resulting evidently from an unfamiliarity with German on the part of those who had done the scanning: asterisks (*) or dollar signs (\$) instead of the two dots of an umlaut over certain vowels (ä, ö, ü) or a forward slash (/) instead of the German hard s (ß). BStU analysts have concluded that other mistakes on the discs resulted from a CIA effort to clean up and improve poor-quality film before scanning.⁴⁹

What is Rosenholz worth and to whom?

BStU analysts characterize Rosenholz as a research aid.⁵⁰ It is that, of course, but of far greater value in a variety of ways.

No doubt its greatest value, at least in the short term, was to prosecutors in the Federal Republic. It helped them before the five-year statute of limitations expired to bring successful espionage cases against more than 250 persons. In many of them, the BfV's handwritten notes of the F-16s, F-22s, and Statistical Sheets constituted crucial evidence either by themselves or as corroboration for evidence from other sources, such as defectors.

A second value for German public service, although evidently an unrealized one for the most part, was as a means to check the backgrounds of parliamentarians, civil servants, and private and public employees. The BStU's holdings of the MfS' *domestic* intelligence files had served this purpose from 1991 in the case of huge numbers of East Germans, many of whom had as a result of this check lost their political positions or jobs. By the time Rosenholz became available at the BStU, however, public appetite for such vetting had ebbed. Although some East German states, such as Thuringia, announced that they intended to make use of the Rosenholz materials to check out their politicians, this practice did not spread widely in the east or at all in the west or at the federal level.⁵¹ All the HVA's major agents in West Germany had, after all, been identified through the work of

Dörrenberg's team with Rosenholz and other BfV work a decade earlier. Marianne Birthler, head of the BStU, announced that she considered it a "matter of honor" for politicians and civil servants to be vetted through the Rosenholz files. But just a few days later, she confessed that she grew "dizzy" contemplating the huge cost and administrative burden on her agency that checking out nearly five million of them would entail.⁵² The interior minister in Schröder's cabinet came out against such vetting as "exaggerated."⁵³ Critics complained that failure to do so would amount to an amnesty for HVA agents in the western states of Germany.

For historians, Rosenholz, when combined with SIRA, constitutes a treasure trove of information. Analysis of Rosenholz-SIRA material discloses, for example, that the motivation of about 60 percent of IMs in the west was political conviction or ideology; 7 percent were motivated by some kind of a personal relationship with the HVA professional running them; and only 1 percent were blackmailed in some fashion into working for the HVA.⁵⁴ About 80 percent, however, accepted some kind of payment for their work, at least to cover expenses. Rare were those like Gabriele Gast who spied for free.

Rosenholz-SIRA material not only permits solid conclusions to be drawn about the work of the HVA, but about intelligence work generally. What they reveal also supplements the history of political and economic relations between the two Germanys during the Cold War, when intelligence played a much more important role than was evident at the time.

Markus Wolf's and Werner Großmann's HVA, together with other departments, made up an A-1 espionage service. Some services, notably the American, are strong in SIGINT, which is a costly undertaking. Most must rely on traditional spying or human intelligence (HUMINT). East Germany was first-rate in both SIGINT and HUMINT, with its continuous telephone, radio, and microwave interception work and its extensive and painstakingly managed network of agents in West Germany. West German experts guess that the HVA by itself produced as much as 80 percent of Warsaw Pact intelligence on the Federal Republic, the crucial front-line state opposed to the Soviet bloc. HVA professionals functioning as case officers dealt sensitively and efficiently with their agents abroad, giving them strong

backup and support. In cases of the best, like Gast, Wolf himself took care to cultivate them personally.

In assessing the HVA's performance, it should not be forgotten that it enjoyed unique major advantages for its work in the Federal Republic: proximity; a common culture; language and history; an open and pluralistic West German society; a government policy of welcoming and granting citizenship to all Germans coming from the East; and a Federal Republic with 12 million of its population originally stemming from the GDR or from territories further east inhabited by Germans until after World War II, a huge body of citizens within which the HVA's agents could easily hide, quickly assimilate, and readily be accepted. Moreover, there was in the 1950s a strong feeling on the West German Left that the anti-fascist GDR represented the "better Germany," and sympathy for the GDR persisted among some West German Leftists in the decades that followed. All this made it easy for the HVA to channel agents into the Federal Republic, particularly easily before the Berlin Wall went up in 1961, but without great difficulty thereafter as well. Such agents could be—and many were—left in place for years as "sleepers" while they advanced in their careers. Such was the case with Guillaume, whom the HVA sent to West Germany in the mid-1950s, and who climbed to become Brandt's personal assistant two decades later.

Such an assessment should also take into account three things.

First, as extensive and well placed as its agents in West Germany may have been, the HVA did not influence political development there in any important way. Only on two occasions did it make a definitive impact: in 1972, when its bribe of a Christian Democratic Bundestag deputy (possibly two) saved Willy Brandt from a no-confidence motion defeat in the parliament and thus saved his Eastern policy, which soon brought diplomatic recognition of the GDR by the Federal Republic and its allies; and in 1974, when disclosure of Guillaume brought Brandt down.

Second, "Sword and Shield" of the ruling Communist Party as the MfS boasted it was, it could not prevent the collapse of that party's state, the GDR. In the end it was sold out by the Soviet Union.

Third, the MfS' "Sword and Shield" role, its foreign espionage and its domestic spying, served the single purpose of protecting the GDR, a state that almost paranoically felt itself continuously threatened by the bigger, richer, more powerful, and increasingly more attractive Federal Republic. Organizationally, the HVA was fully integrated into the MfS. That means it was an integral part of a structure of repression of the East German population, to which the HVA's own 10,000 IMs living in the GDR contributed in various ways. In an epilogue to his German memoirs, Wolf treads a fine line on this point, cautiously conceding that he was "a part of this system...[that had] its shadowy side" and that as one who participated in power, he shares "responsibility for its 'misuse' also by others"⁵⁵—a confession that falls a little short of admitting that his HVA, as an integrated unit of the MfS, was, therefore, a "criminal" organization, as East German civic rights activists to this day will assert.⁵⁶

Notes

1 See the meticulous study by Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Rosenholz: Eine Quellenkritik, BF Informiert*, Berlin: BStU, 2007 (hereinafter, *Quellenkritik*); and Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Hereinafter: *Seduced*.

2 Benjamin Fischer, "The Soviet-American War Scare of the 1980s," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 19:3 (fall 2006), pp. 450–518. See also: Markus Wolf with Anne McElvoy, *Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism's Greatest Spymaster*, New York: Random House, 1997, pp. 330–331. Hereinafter: *Man Without a Face*.

3 *Man Without a Face*, p. 110. Wolf's German memoirs differ from his American autobiography in some key respects, mainly relating to inner-German politics. See: Markus Wolf, *Spionagechef im geheimen Krieg: Erinnerungen*, Munich: Econ Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998. Hereinafter: *Spionagechef*.

4 Interview with Markus Wolf, Berlin, 3 July 2004. Hereinafter: Wolf interview.

5 *Quellenkritik*, pp. 36–67.

6 3 March 2009, letter from Herbert Ziehm of the BStU.

7 *Quellenkritik*, pp. 68–92.

8 Ibid., pp. 9–125. See also: *Seduced*, chapter 4; and Chapter 11 in this volume.

9 Information in this section is taken mainly from four e-mails to the author from Colonel Bernd Fischer, dated 28 November, 1 December, 2 December 2007, and 3 March 2009. Hereinafter: Fischer e-mails 1, 2, 3, and 4. Fischer's last HVA position was chief of Department I, which was responsible for intelligence about the West German government, including the Federal Chancellery.

10 Fischer e-mails 1 and 3.

11 Georg Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR Spionage*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007, p. 83. Hereinafter: *Bundesbürger*. For details on SIRA, see: Stephan Konopatzky, "Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der SIRA-Datenbanken" in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu...*, Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003, pp. 112–132. Hereinafter: *Gesicht*.

12 A detailed analysis of HVA espionage operations is to be found in *Bundesbürger*, pp. 70–85. A concise description of these operations is in Jens Gieseke, *MielkeKonzern: Die Geschichte der Stasi 1945–1990*, Stuttgart and Munich: Deutscher Verlags-Anstalt, 2001, pp. 196–228. Hereinafter: *Mielke-Konzern*. For a second concise description, see: Helmut Müller-Enbergs, "Die Erforschung der Westarbeit der MfS—Stand und Perspektiven," in Siegfried Suckurt and Jürgen Weber (ed.), *Stasi-Akten zwischen Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, Munich: Olzog Verlag, 2003, pp. 240–269. See also: *Quellenkritik*, pp. 130–131.

13 *Bundesbürger*, p. 84.

14 *Man Without a Face*, p. 344.

15 Wolf interview.

16 *Bundesbürger*, pp. 79–80.

17 Fischer e-mail 1. 3 March 2009 letter from Herbert Ziehm of the BStU.

18 Helmut-Enbergs, “Kleine Geschichte zum Findhilfsmittel namens ‘Rosenholz’,” *Deutschland Archiv*, October 2003, pp. 751–752. Hereinafter: “Kleine Geschichte.”

19 “Der Stasi-Schatz,” *Focus*, 25 October 1993.

20 Wolfgang Templin, “Mit dem Teufel essen,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 18 September 2003, p. 9. On the dissolution of the HVA, see Werner Großmann, *Bonn im Blick: Die DDR Aufklärung aus der Sicht ihres letzten Chefs*, Berlin: Das Neue Berlin, 2001, pp. 186–197. Hereinafter: *Bonn im Blick*. Interview with Bernd Fischer in Berlin, 2 June 2008. Hereinafter: Fischer interview. Dörrenberg in *Gesicht*, p. 94 observes that the Central Roundtable’s limited “horizon of information” did not allow it to recognize the “many-sided linkages between the HVA and the repressive apparatus of the MfS.”

21 Fischer interview. Telephone conversation with Fischer, 21 December 2008.

22 Fischer e-mail 1. Fischer interview.

23 BStU, *Fünfter Tätigkeitsbericht*, Berlin, 2001, p. 94.

24 Fischer interview. Dörrenberg in *Gesicht*, p. 97 stresses that until his BfV obtained the Rosenholz materials, destruction of the HVA files severely hampered its effort to uncover the HVA’s agents, its IMs, in West Germany.

25 Fischer interview. Fischer e-mail 2.

26 Most information in this section came in 1998, 1999, 2003, 2004, 2007, and 2008 from six retired CIA officers who prefer not to be identified.

27 Milton Bearden and James Risen, *The Main Enemy: The Inside Story of the CIA's Final Showdown with the KGB*, New York: Random House, 2003, pp. 421–422. Hereinafter: *The Main Enemy*.

28 See Benjamin B. Fischer's Chapter 4 in this volume.

29 *The Main Enemy*, pp. 437–439. *Spionagechef*, p. 20.

30 Fischer e-mail 4.

31 *Man Without a Face*, pp. 12–15. *Spionagechef*, pp. 18–26. *The Main Enemy*, pp. 441–442.

32 *The Main Enemy*, pp. 436–437.

33 Benjamin Fischer, "One of the Biggest Ears in the World: East German SIGINT," *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, 11:2 (Summer 1998), pp. 142–153.

34 *Seduced*, pp. 76–77. *Bonn im Blick*, pp. 198–200. Fischer interview. Wolf interview. Müller-Enbergs considers the question open. See: *Quellenkritik*, pp. 26–7. Rainer Hemmann testified to the Federal Prosecutor that sometime between 14 November 1989 and the middle of January 1990 he delivered a briefcase with microfilms in it to the KGB in Berlin-Karlshorst. 9 March 2009 letter from Herbert Ziehm of the BStU.

35 *The Main Enemy*, p. 437.

36 Milton Bearden, who became CIA station chief in Bonn in June 1992, maintains that it was late 1992 or early 1993.

37 Based on Wolf's statement that 90 percent of HVA agents worked in West Germany or West Berlin (see notes 15 and 16 above), an estimate of 160–180 HVA agents in countries other than Germany seems reasonable. Bernd Fischer confirms this general range, estimating that in countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, France and Finland, the HVA ran about 5–8

agents in each. Ten in the United States thus seems about right. Fischer e-mail 1.

38 Information in this section stems mainly from Dörrenberg in *Gesicht*, pp. 96–100. See also: *Quellenkritik*, p. 30. Also: 9 March 2009 letter from Herbert Ziehm of the BStU.

39 Joachim Lampe, *Juristische Aufarbeitung der Westspionage des MfS*, Berlin: BF Informiert Nr. 24, BStU, Berlin, p. 9. Dörrenberg in *Gesicht*, p. 107 comments that the number of convictions compared to the number of judicial inquiries launched was “relatively small.”

40 28 February 2008 telephone conversation with Herbert Ziehm of the BStU.

41 The best account of these two spies’ work is to be found in *Seduced*, pp. 94–111. See also Klaus Eichner and Andreas Dobbert, *Headquarters Germany: Die USA-Geheimdienste in Deutschland*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 2001, pp. 224–239. Hereinafter: *Headquarters Germany*. See also: *Sponagechef*, pp. 411–415; *Bonn im Blick*, pp. 102–105, and “Kein schöner Land,” *Der Spiegel*, 14 July 2003, pp. 52–55.

42 Stefan Geiger, “Kohl siegt und die Presse guckt in die Röhre,” *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 24 June 2004, p. 3. Probably typical of attitudes at the time at the top of the West German government is the comment to the author by a former president (1985–1990) of the BND:

Had it not been for the East German victims of the GDR’s oppressive system, the West Germans, including the German government, would have put the MfS files—those that had not been burnt or shredded—into the oven and would have closed the books on the issue, because the GDR system had collapsed and it was not worth the while to dig it up in order to unveil all the crimes committed.

(31 March 2009, e-mail from Hans-Georg Wieck)

43 Letter from Thomas Polgar, 4 January 1999.

44 *Quellenkritik*, p. 29.

45 Fritz Stern, *Five Germanys I Have Known*, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006, p. 489.

46 *Man Without a Face*, pp. 264–281.

47 Robert Gerald Livingston, “The Quest for Stasi’s Old Files,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 December 1998, p. M2.

48 “The Chatham House Spy,” *The Times* (London), 16 September 2000.
“Archives Reveal Sheer Scale of Stasi Spy Ring,” *The Times* (London), 18 September 2000.

49 *Quellenkritik*, pp. 28–29.

50 “Kleine Geschichte,” p. 761.

51 “Kleine Geschichte,” pp. 758–759.

52 “Für Birthler ist Stasi-Überprüfung von Politikern ‘Ehrensache’,” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 13 September 2003, p. 4. “Die Westlinke hat sich gedrückt,” *taz*, 15 September 2003.

53 “Schily gegen neue Prüfung,” *Der Spiegel*, 38, 2003.

54 *Bundesbürger*, pp. 250–295.

55 *Spionagechef*, p. 485.

56 See, for example, *Pressemitteilung der Bundesbeauftragten für die Stasi-Unterlagen (BStU)*, Berlin: BStU, 1 June 2007, which refers to “The crimes of the Ministry for State Security, including the HVA.” Marianne Birthler, head of the BStU, is a former civic rights activist.

Part II

Political intelligence

6

Political intelligence

Foci and sources, 1969–1989

Helmut Müller-Enbergs

The history of the HVA is widely untapped, even more so their intelligence priorities and especially the sources they used. The first part of this chapter is an attempt to answer the question: What were the objectives and which assets did various important HVA departments have at their disposal for conducting political espionage?

Sources are usually people who gave, consciously or unconsciously, information to the HVA. These sources generally had an alias and were assigned a number, known as their registration number. With the help of this registration number, the source can usually be identified.¹ It is located on an index card, of which approximately 300,000 have survived to this day. The index card files, now called ‘Rosenholz’ were obtained by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and partially returned to the Stasi file authority in 2000, that is, they returned any cards containing information where German interests were involved.² These index cards contained home, workplace and occupational information, information we shall use below. It is, therefore, sufficient just to cite the registration number after the respective alias name without further details on the origin of the source in order to locate a document at the Stasi archive in Berlin. The intelligence provided by the sources for the years 1969 to 1989 is now available in a database named SIRA.³ All information included a single eight-digit number, the system input number.

Top HVA assets were usually not prominent in civic life. The belief that top assets were reputable politicians or high-profile party officials is a common misconception. In fact, they were usually people who were active at certain pivotal points of institutions that the public barely noted, but that had considerable importance for the gathering of operational intelligence. In

order to support this argument, we shall examine the three most important sources of each of the three HVA departments primarily concerned with military policy or politics: HVA I, which dealt with the West German government and its ministries; HVA II, which was responsible for the operational handling of West German political parties; and finally HVA XI, which was entrusted with espionage against American institutions.⁴ In the following presentation, besides the examination of the operational foci, the main purpose is to determine time periods, the performance of agents and—last but not least—their quality.

The presentation reads like a list, but should be helpful for future researchers. Moreover, the sources themselves are, for legal reasons, only cited with their aliases, because although almost any source can be identified, the exposure of an IM cannot always be proven—either legally or academically. In order to create a uniform appearance, civil names have been omitted on the citation. Given the substantial destruction of HVA files, additional material that would illuminate the respective operations is rarely available.

This insufficiency shall be compensated for in the second part of this chapter. The ‘Brest’ operation (XV 317/69) is described using the example of HVA Department XI. Brest was smuggled into the US in order to obtain a single piece of information in the period 1969–1979. His case demonstrates how much energy was expended for a small return.

West German government and ministries in the view of HVA I

HVA I focused on policies and strategic intentions of the federal government, i.e. on the Federal Chancellery and the Foreign Office, among others. Therefore, it dealt with almost all federal ministries, including those for planning and construction, nutrition, youth and families or justice—with the exception of the Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg) and the Federal Ministry for Research and Technology (BMFT).

Each HVA department had its own tasks to which certain operational priority targets which had to be infiltrated with the help of sources were assigned. Seven operational units (HVA I/1-I/7) had to be coordinated. The

operational volume of information in HVA I benefited from just two operations that their new member, Rolf Wiesel, had brought with him on his transfer from unit HVA 1/6. It concerned the source 'Tokio' (XV 3428/72), who worked as an official in charge at the Department Weapons Control and NATO infrastructure of a federal agency that represented an intersection between economy, defense industry and the Army, the *Bundesamt für gewerbliche Wirtschaft* at Eschborn. From February 1973 to June 1989, 'Tokio' delivered 549 pieces of information, of which only six were classified as 'valuable' (II). The significance of 'Tokio' becomes obvious if compared to other sources of HVA I. In the period between 1969 and 1989, the HVA I received information from 278 sources, thus leading to a mathematical average of 52 pieces of information per source.

The political scientist 'Richard' (XV 351/73) provided 493 pieces of information, 45 of which were assessed as 'valuable', confirming the picture we get from 'Tokio'. The information, which was provided in the period between August 1974 and June 1989, was primarily concerned with the Christian Democrat Party (CDU) (131 pieces).

The HVA 1/1 was concerned with the *Bundeskanzleramt*, the 'operational headquarters' of the chancellor, the *Bundespräsidialamt* (Office of the President), the *Bundespresse- und Informationsamt* (Federal Press and Information Office), the security group of the *Bundeskriminalamt*, the Max Planck Society, and apparently also with the Berlin Social Science Research Center. All in all, ten target objects are registered for HVA Department 1/1. Among the three HVA 1/1 top assets was source 'Reinhard' (XV 1683/69), a scientist at the Max Planck Society who delivered a total of 346 pieces of information to the HVA between 1983 and 1989. The information supplied by 'Reinhard' often dealt with NATO military policy. FIM [*Führungs-IM*, 'unofficial collaborator in charge'] 'Robert' (XV 338/77), a social scientist at the Berlin Social Science Research Center, should also be considered a top asset. An FIM was an agent in charge of other IMs. In the period between 1977 and October 1988, he delivered 161 pieces of information, mostly documents related to the Jülich or Karlsruhe nuclear research centres. 'Rohde' (XV 380/84), who repeatedly went to Western Europe between 1983 and 1986, almost constantly delivered studies by the Rand Corporation, a US think-tank concerned with research and development.

HVA Department 1/2 was responsible for intelligence operations directed against the Federal Foreign Office. The department's most important IM was source 'Merten' (XV 6427/60), who had cooperated with the HVA since 1959, but was first taken on by HVA 1/2 in 1969. The Foreign Office official delivered 1,450 pieces of information in the period from January 1969 to March 1989, which served the analysts as a basis for 277 reports that were forwarded to the party leadership. In 96 cases, his information was assessed to be 'very valuable', in 357 cases as 'valuable'. Therewith, he is just ahead of Foreign Office official 'Adler' (XV 15905/60), one of the oldest HVA sources. In the period between August 1969 and February 1989, he provided a total of 1,377 pieces of information, 55 of which were deemed 'very valuable' and 271 'valuable'—on the basis of which the HVA analysts were able to produce 123 pieces of information. Object source 'Brede' (XV 13864/60), a Foreign Office diplomat, was hired in July 1957. From July 1969 to May 1989, 587 pieces of information from him were recorded, 28 of which were classified 'very valuable' and 56 'valuable'.

Like HVA 1/2, HVA Department I/3 was concerned with the Foreign Office. Its focus was diplomats and a research centre concerned with socialist countries, the *Bundesinstitut für Ostwissenschaften und Internationale Studien* (BIOST). Eight target objects are registered for HVA I/3. Whereas HVA 1/2 infiltrated the Foreign Office with the sources available, HVA I/3 was supposed to win new sources. The top assets of HVA I/3 were the married couple 'Rabe' (XV 3439/60) and 'Dohle' (XV 3439/60); he was a so-called 'A-source', she, allegedly, a person of contact. An information source (*Abschöpfquelle*, literally: 'pump for information') recruited employees of an HVA target object. In the 1960s, 'Dohle' worked as a speaker for a humanitarian organization, the *Deutsche Stiftung für Entwicklungshilfe*, 'Rabe' as sub-editor of the paper *Bonner Generalanzeiger*. Both operations were set up in July 1960 and remained in action for nearly 30 years. 'Dohle' delivered 39 pieces of information between September 1969 and May 1987 about West German development aid, and later internals from the German embassy in Moscow. 'Rabe' was responsible for 117 pieces of information from the period between November 1969 and December 1986. Notoriously, his main focus was on German-Russian relations. In 16 cases, quite a remarkable figure, his information flew into analyses that were forwarded to the party leaders.

The contact to the O-source 'Angelika' (XV 494/76), who would later become a Foreign Office official, was already established during her studies in 1976. However, we can see from the information recorded that she first delivered some information between February 1984 and November 1986. From a total of 38 pieces of political information, 29 documents went to HVA I/3, 17 of which were classified as 'valuable' and one as 'very valuable', containing excerpts from a conversation of December 1985 between the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Hans-Dietrich Genscher and George Schulz.

From 1970 onwards, HVA Department 1/4 was concerned with the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI). Insofar, the department focused on numerous West German federal agencies and civil defence organizations. All in all, 15 objects were registered. In February 1963, an operation with an unknown cover name (XV 219/63) was registered and handled by Department 1/4. For the period from August 1969 to April 1975, 142 pieces of information can be traced back to this source, which is more information than any other HVA 1/4 source provided. Most of them (82) were in a documentary form and dealt with international issues relating to the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit* (DEG). The O-source 'Schuh' or 'Erwin' (XV 132/70) from North-Rhine Westphalia was registered in March 1970. He, who was charged with the *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung*, delivered 61 pieces of information, among them protocols reporting from the CDU, its youth organization *Junge Union* and from the conference of federal ministers of the BMI, the *Innenministerkonferenz*. Seven documents and five assessments that were classified as 'valuable', also due to a *Bundesgrenzschutz* address list, have been recorded. The period during which information was delivered reaches from February 1973 to May 1989 at least.

From 1970 on, HVA Department I/5 was concerned with any 'politicalideological diversion' (PiD) emanating from West Germany, with a particular focus on the *Bundesministerium für innerdeutsche Beziehungen* (BMB). Other key targets included the West German *Ostinstitut* and the administration of the European Community's Council of Ministers in Belgium. All in all, we are dealing with six objects. Besides HVA 1/2, HVA I/5 may well be referred to as the most efficient sub-department within the

HVA I. A-source 'Fichtel' (XV 18243/60), with 1,835 oral and written pieces of information in a period of 20 years, i.e. one every three days on average, is the undisputed leader of the list of HVA I spies. 'Fichtel' was also the department's oldest source. The party leadership was informed on the basis of his operationally obtained material 118 times in the period from 1973 to 1978. 'Fichtel' mainly delivered documents— 1,248 may be evidenced, only three of which were classified as 'very valuable'. These were diagrams and tables of the organization and personnel of the federal administration for 1979/1980. The KGB received more than half of this information (738). O-source 'Weber' (XV 819/66), who was registered in May 1966 and served as a leading government official at the *Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung* (BMZ), was not just among the most important IM besides 'Fichtel' of Department I/5, but of all the HVA I. He accounted for 833 pieces of information in the period from March 1974 to September 1988, i.e. one piece per week, mostly in the shape of delivered documents (747), marking an extraordinary achievement. Of those, 250 were classified as 'valuable' and nine as 'very valuable' by Department VII. The BMZ, with 122 pieces of information, was a clear intelligence priority.

Among the top reports, we find a seven-page assessment of Brezhnev's May 1978 visit to Bonn by the Foreign Office and various reports on Mozambique, some of them comprising more than 200 pages. The couple, 'Töpfer' (as an O-source) and 'Vera' (as an SIM, XV 821/66), who were recruited at the same time were more or less from the same mould as 'Weber'. A *Sicherungs-IM* ['security IM', or SIM] was usually the spouse of a source whom he or she would support in various ways. 'Töpfer' accounts for 538 pieces of information, 316 of which are documents, in the period between November 1973 and November 1987, with remarkably positive assessments. Of these 538 piece of information, 111 received the top mark of 'very valuable', and 181 were 'valuable'. The head of the Department Politics of the BMB, 'Töpfer', came close to covering the information demand concerning the relations between GDR and FRG of Department I all by himself. Out of 219 pieces of information on this issue, 113 can be traced back to 'Töpfer'. The analysts referred to his information in 17 intelligence digits for the party leadership.

HVA Department 1/6 was in charge of operations related to banks and financial institutions, the *Bundeskartellamt*, the *Bundesamt für gewerbliche Wirtschaft* in Eschborn, as well as the Federal Ministries for Economy (BMWi), Finances (BMF) and—like HVA I/5—to the BMB. All in all, seven objects are recorded. ‘Berger’ (XV 1579/68), senior executive officer at the Federal Ministry for Research and Technology, accounted for more than half of the information flow of HVA 1/6. She was by far the department’s top asset. In 990 pieces of information, which were recorded between October 1969 and May 1989, she reported on the scientific and technological cooperation between West Germany and other states, notably Latin American countries and the USA. Mostly, she delivered copies of documents (638). In 67 cases, political or military information was classified as ‘valuable’; in 20 cases, her information was reported to the party leaders, which proves their significance. ‘Krüger’ (XV 18556/60), a native of Dresden, born in 1931, had been linked to the HVA since July 1953. In the period between August 1970 and May 1989, he accounts for 521 pieces of information (among them 50 documents), 38 of which were classified as ‘very valuable’. They were mostly concerned with the relations between West Germany and the GDR—at times with Poland and often with the Social Democrat Party, SPD (217). The party leaders were informed of about 69 pieces of information gathered by him. The A-source ‘Junge’ (XV 411/73), with 252 pieces of information between July 1974 and May 1989, occupies the third rank within HVA 1/6. He, who would later become CDU district director and temporarily law counsellor at the *Ministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit* received the grade ‘very valuable’ for four of his pieces of intelligence.

Work against political parties conducted by HVAII

The main priority of the operational activity of HVA Department II was ‘working on’ the most important parties, youth organizations and other political associations and organizations in the Federal Republic of Germany, and, besides, ‘objects’ of PiD. In particular, it was responsible for party executive committees on both national and federal state levels, political trusts and societies such as the *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, *Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung* and *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung*, extremist parties on the far Left and Right of the political spectrum, the executive committees of the unions

DGB and IG Metall, but also for research institutions such as the universities of Gießen and Hamburg, the *Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Politik* in Hamburg or the *Forschungsstelle für Jugendfragen* in Hannover.

HVA II coordinated the work of seven operational sub-departments. However, it was also responsible for some significant operations that had originally been handled by one of those departments itself. These operations included handling the personal clerk of the chairman of the trade union umbrella organization DGB, ‘Steiger’ (XV 11825/60) and ‘Becker’ (XV 808/61), a member of the Bavarian parliament for the SPD, who had been looked after by HVA Department II/direction after they had been arrested. ‘Becker’ was responsible for 109 pieces of information that dealt mainly with the Bavarian SPD, dating back to the period between August 1969 and July 1979, as well as from June 1986. Furthermore, the West Berlin IG Metall functionary ‘Milli’ (XV 12121/60), who reported on ‘leading’ SPD functionaries and members of the Peace Movement in 11 cases, was registered with HVA II/direction. The 414 sources the HVA II had between 1969 and 1989 shown the enormous significance of this unit. These sources supplied 36 pieces of secret intelligence on average.

HVA Department II/1 dealt with the CDU and CSU, the European People’s Party, the *Ring Christlich-Demokratischer Studenten*, the *Junge Union*, the *Bildungszentrum Schloss Eichhoh*, the Konrad Adenauer and the Hanns Seidel Trust. Besides, it ‘worked on’ the Catholic and Protestant churches as well as the Holy See (‘St Peter’). All in all, HVA II/1 attended to 35 objects, a remarkably high number. The A-source ‘Tusch’ (XV 3058/75), an official from Munich, was one of the most productive suppliers of information to Department II/1, accounting for 291 pieces. In the period between November 1975 and November 1987, they consistently covered CSU issues, particularly from the field of defence and arms policy. Of these, 61 were documents, just one of which—concerning the CSU defense policy working committee—was considered ‘very valuable’. In five instances, reports went on to the party leadership. With the secretary ‘Herta’ (XV 1087/67), who worked for the CDU, HVA II/1 had an extraordinary source at their disposal from 1967. ‘Herta’ delivered a total of 255 pieces of information, mainly documents (167), about the party coalition CDU/CSU in the period between August 1970 and February 1979. The significance of

this source is shown by the fact that their information was forwarded to the SED leadership on 70 occasions. 'Iltis' (XV 8661/61), also a secretary, accounts for 253 pieces of information between September 1969 and December 1978, 55 of which served as the basis of intelligence digests for the SED leadership and which reported on the CDU/CSU parliamentary group in the *Bundestag*, was similarly significant.

HVA Department II/2 turned its attention to liberal and nationalist movements in West Germany, particularly to the liberal party FDP, its youth organization *Junge Liberale* and to the *Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung*. Furthermore, it turned also turned its attention to the nationalist party *Die Republikaner* (previously NPD), the European Union, the *Freiheitliche Volkspartei* and associated economic and political organizations, and also to the *Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung*. In the 1950s, the department also dealt with *Deutsche Partei* (DP), whose significance decreased sharply in 1961.

All in all, 17 objects are recorded for HVA II/2. The most important HVA II/2 source was 'Anna' (XV 2873/62), who was the secretary of an FDP member of the *Bundestag* who would later become FDP secretary-general, and from 1984 onwards worked for the minister of the *Bundeswirtschaftsministerium*. She, who had started with her operational work in May 1962, accounts for 492 pieces of information in the period between December 1970 and July 1985, most of them documents (394). Most of these were protocols and positional papers from the FDP parliamentary group, three of which were graded 'very good' and 29 were reported to the SED leadership. In the period from November 1969 to May 1989, the journalist 'Auto' (XV 8618/61) delivered 412 pieces of information, mostly on nationalist or national-conservative circles. 'Olaf' (XV 4604/60) was an FDP politician, a member of the *Bundestag* from 1965 to 1972 and member of the FDP executive committee from 1960 to 1982. 'Olaf' had been registered by the HVA since September 1959 and delivered a total of 345 pieces of information between September 1969 and September 1986, leading to 62 reports to the SED leaders.

HVA II/3 was, as we shall demonstrate, rather badly positioned. It dealt with 'ideological diversion' and the territorial associations such as the

Association for Refugees or rightist or extremist groups. Altogether, it dealt with nine objects. Only one HVA II/3 source, 'Schwerdtfeger' (XV 2356/79), a professor at the Hannover Polytechnic, is worth mentioning. This source's 11 pieces of information were, however, just loosely linked to the department's operational priority. The 11 pieces of intelligence, which were recorded between April 1980 and July 1983, cover, exclusively, issues of GDR-related research. Six were documents, mostly reviews of conferences of GDR researchers, and on a single occasion a draft paper of the Commission for the Humanization of the World of Labor of the SPD executive committee.

HVA Department II/4 was responsible for operations dealing with the SPD ('Harz'), in particular Department I of the party executive committee, the SPD parliamentary group in the *Bundestag*, the *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung* and the Socialist International (SI). Eight objects are recorded for HVA 11/4. The HVA top asset in the SPD was 'Max' (XV 1628/68), an employee of the SPD executive committee and of the SPD *Ostbüro*, whose last occupation was that of a freelance journalist.

The couple 'Marcella' and 'Hans' (XV 14906/60) were able to provide extensive details on the policies of the SPD in West Berlin. Successively, both of them were members of the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, Berlin's parliament. 'Hans' had been connected with the HVA since March 1957. The couple provided 1,020 pieces of information in the period between July 1969 and May 1989, among them 123 documents. Of this information, 421 pieces of secret intelligence were used in reports to the SED leadership. With 951 pieces of information, the O-sources 'Bob' and 'Petra' (XV 1471/65) rank third within Department II/4. The employee of the SPD executive committee and of the SPD *Bundestag* group provided broad insights into the SPD. Nearly all pieces of information (844) were documents and were incorporated in 54 intelligence digits for the SED leaders.

HVA Department II/5 operationally dealt with the trade union umbrella association, DGB and the associated unions in West Germany and West Berlin, as well as—at least temporarily—the *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung* and four more objects. Union secretary 'Steiger' (XV 11825/60), for some time the personal clerk of the DGB chair person, was the top asset of HVA II/5.

He was operationally active between April 1956 and April 1972 and was last handled by the direction of HVA II. In the period from 1969 to 1989, the employee of the DGB federal executive committee, O-source 'Gaston' (XV 141/65), was by far the source with the most relevant information. The member of the control panel of the state TV station ZDF, the *ZDF-Fernsehrat* and of the *Kuratorium Unteilbares Deutschland* ('curatorship indivisible Germany') delivered 676 pieces of information on these areas. The O-source 'Marbach' (XV 2177/64), an employee of the union ÖTV, reported on the development of the ÖTV, its board of directors, the board of the North-Rhine Westphalian DGB and on meetings of the working group of the *Ruhrigas AG*. 'Wein' (XV 13853/60), head of department in the IG Metall executive committee, who had been in touch with the HVA since December 1956, provided a total of 147 pieces of information between September 1969 and September 1987. They allowed deep insights into the work of the IG Metall executive committee, but also into the SPD and details on the so-called 'Konzertierte Aktion' ('concerted action') of 1969/1970, a cooperation between unions and business, the protocols of which went to the HVA.

HVA Department II/6, which was established in February 1969, was responsible for Leftist organizations and groups of the extreme Left. The Peace Movement, conservation organizations and wildlife trusts, the Green party, the party *Alternative Liste West-Berlin* and various Trotskyist, Maoist and anarchist groups ranked among these. Furthermore, it dealt with the three objects 'Poet' (XV 2027/67), 'Auslese' (XV 192/69) and 'Club' (XV 1764/65). The calligrapher 'Sputnik' (XV 1535/68) was the department's top asset. He supplied the HVA with 294 pieces of information between September 1973 and October 1984. In the 1970s, details on the Maoist KPD and the *Liga gegen den Imperialismus* in West Berlin were at the centre of interest, as at times were also the Russell Tribunal, in the early 1980s, the Maoist secession of the *MarxistenLeninisten Deutschlands* and finally the *Alternative Liste West-Berlin*. Here, in particular, sessions of the council of delegates and of the executive committee were of interest. No less important whatsoever was the A-source 'Steinweg' of the University FU Berlin, who accounts for 216 pieces of information between January 1980 and May 1989. 'Steinweg' reported from the First Congress of the *Kommunistischer Bund* and on the *Alternativen Liste West-Berlin*,

particularly from their general assemblies and their group in the *Abgeordnetenhaus*. Last but not least, protocols of *Bundestag* groups and of their closed meetings enjoyed a high priority. The chairman of the district organization, Siegerland, of the party *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands/Marxisten-Leninisten*, 'Heizer', kept HVA II/6 up to date about various Maoist groups, in particular about the *Kommunistischen Arbeiterbund Deutschlands* (later renamed: *Marxistisch-Leninistische Partei Deutschlands*) and the *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands/Marxisten-Leninisten* (later renamed: *Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*) and *Vereinigte Sozialistische Partei*, respectively, with 90 pieces of information between March 1971 and September 1985.

The HVA Department II/8, which was established in February 1989, was a unit that dealt with analysis and evaluation issues. Judging from the information flow, HVA II/8 operational work was primarily concerned with the left wing of the social democrat party. 'Kirchner' (XV 5210/85) provided 31 reports on the views of a 'leading representative of the parliamentary left' or the 'left wing of the SPD *Bundestag* group' as well as a meeting of leftist SPD members in the '*Frankfurter Kreis*' in the period from December 1985 to May 1989. Moreover, a couple of operations that had previously been productive were recorded by department HVA II/8. For instance, the student from Kiel, 'Kirchner' (XV6231/82), was registered alongside some SPD top politicians. The 16 reports received between March 1983 and July 1985 deal with details provided by a 'leftist SPD politician at federal level' or from a 'member of the SPD *Bundestag* group', respectively. The 11 reports by 'Soldat' (XV 18252/60) on the situation of the SPD in Hesse also date further back (December 1981-April 1983).

Espionage against the USA by HVA XI

The operational priority of HVA Department XI was political and military espionage against the USA and Canada and their forces in Europe. The extent of the interest in North America is demonstrated by the numerous facilities the department was supposed to have its sights on. The 'main objects' were the White House, Department of State, Department of Defense and Congress. Among what HVA Department XI considered the 'basic objects' in the fields of politics and military were institutes and

research facilities with tight links to the White House - for example, the Heritage Foundation (Washington, DC); the American Enterprise Institute (Washington, DC); the Hoover Institution on War, Peace and Revolution (Stanford University, California); the Center for Strategic and International Studies (Georgetown University); the School of International Affairs (Columbia University, New York); the RAND Corporation (Santa Monica, California); the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (Tufts University, Medford); and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge).

HVA Department XI considered universities and research facilities that were closely linked to the Department of State to be of similar importance, particularly, among others, Georgetown University (Washington, DC) and the Kennedy School of Government (Harvard University, Cambridge). Due to their ties to the Department of Defense, universities and research and education facilities such as the Institute for Defense Analysis (Arlington), the Hudson Institute (New York), the Russian Research Center (Harvard University, Cambridge), the US Military Academy (West Point, New York), the National War College (Washington, DC), as well as various aerospace institutes, needed to be operationally covered. The Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research and the Heritage Foundation (all Washington, DC) enjoyed high operational attention because of their closeness to Congress.

Besides these facilities, high-profile foundations like the Rockefeller Foundation (New York), the Ford Foundation (New York) and, under the aspect of ‘political diversion’, the United States Information Agency (USIA), enjoyed a high operational interest.

However, it is important to note that we are dealing with a wish list here, as the real operational focus was on American facilities in Germany. The headquarters of the US forces in Europe (USEUCOM) at Stuttgart and of the US land forces in Europe (USAREUR) at Heidelberg were considered to be the most important target objects by HVA Department XI—sharing part of the set with HVA Department IV—thus focusing their operations on members and civil employees of the US Army in West Germany, in particular, on those located in the garrisons in places such as Stuttgart, Heidelberg, Ramstein and West Berlin. Other primary targets included the

US Embassy at Bonn, the US Mission, the Allied Commandantura and the General Lucius D. Clay Headquarters in West Berlin. Besides these, the following 'basic objects' were also included: the US consulate generals at Hamburg, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt (Main), Stuttgart and Munich, the 6912th Electronic Security Group and the Field Station at Berlin-Tempelhof, - Marienfelde and -Teufelsberg, as well as the US Air Force at Berlin-Tempelhof. Finally, even American educational facilities in southern and northwest Germany.

Twelve objects are listed for HVA XI, among them the Pentagon, the White House and the Department of State. The head of department at the department store *Hertie* in Hanau, undercover agent 'Walter' and his wife, the courier 'Waltraud' (XV 1311/68), who had been in touch with the HVA since August 1967, obtained 291 pieces of information between April 1970 and October 1983, mostly documents. HVA Department XI had 304 sources at its disposal in the period from 1971 to 1989, who, on average, supplied the HVA with 37 pieces of information.

Most of them came from the US land forces in Europe (USAREUR) at Heidelberg. The non-German citizen 'William' (XV 1797/69) delivered 74 pieces of information, among them 58 documents, between June 1970 and August 1984. They dealt with the management structure of General Motors, as well as with plans of senators and congressmen, mostly relating to US domestic policy. Few and far between, he provided the minutes of the Communism research institute of Columbia University. The source 'Fürst' (XV 6281/81), who apparently operated from the US Army base at Grafenwoehr, takes the third rank among the sources handled by the direction of HVA XI. She accounts for 60 pieces of information, 26 of them documents, delivered between December 1981 and July 1984. Among them were the US battlefield regulations for nuclear ammunition (109 pages) and the detection of heavy warheads (318 pages), as well as information about structural considerations and summarizing reports on the first missile launches of the Pershing Brigade. HVA Department XI/1 was responsible for operations covering North America, Canada and Mexico. US Sergeant 'Kid' (XV 2047/84) of the 6912th Electronic Security Group stationed at Berlin-Marienfelde provided 64 pieces of information, among them 12 documents, between April 1985 and February 1986. Among them were

dossiers on electronic warfare, such as the document ‘Canopy Wing’, which analysed weak spots in the Soviet staff’s radiofrequency communications.⁵ More than every second piece of information was classified as ‘very valuable’ (35). The non-German citizen ‘Anker’ (XV 137/81), who had first been handled by Department XV of the district administration Karl-Marx-Stadt, delivered 62 pieces of information, most of which were photocopies (49) and were related to the Air Force and Ramstein, between April 1982 and October 1988. Repeatedly, details related to ‘Exercise Schedule’ FY 2/81-FY 3/82 and Airborne Electronic Equipment were at their centre. FIM ‘Bernd’, an engineer, and his wife, Perspective-IM (PIM) ‘Angela’ (XV 366/77), who worked as a secretary at the FDP executive committee of West Berlin, were listed as HVA XI/1 sources. However, they primarily provided information on the FDP in the period between July 1977 and May 1982.

HVA Department XI/2 focused on the US embassies in Bonn and in other German-speaking countries, but also on US citizens in West Germany. All in all, six objects are listed for the department. HVA Department XI/2 operated extremely efficiently. The O-source ‘Erich’ (XV 47/68), an official at the West German Defense Ministry, provided 2,303 pieces of information, most of them documents (1,611) in the period between November 1969 and November 1987. Most of them were internal documents of the Federal Ministry—however, there were also some on NATO matters as well as on military research projects.

No less important was O-source ‘Gerhard’ (XV 4607/75), a foreign language secretary at the US Embassy in Bonn. She accounts for 1,545 pieces of information (1,364 of them documents), which were received by HVA XI/2 in the period from March 1976 to May 1989. They give considerable insight into the work of the US Embassy, as concerns military issues in particular. She was able to provide detailed accounts of Pershing II, including their deployment with the *Bundeswehr*. Rank three in the list of the most significant sources of HVA Department XI/2 is occupied by the A-source ‘Hoffmann’ (XV 232/67), who can be linked to 494 pieces of information (457 documents), mostly on foreign policy issues, which he obtained from his position, first as a researcher at the *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik* in Ebenhausen, and later as a professor at the FU Berlin. In 13

instances, intelligence digests directed at the SED leaders were produced on the grounds of this information—in two cases, the grade ‘very valuable’ was awarded.

HVA Department XI/3 had operations aimed at handling sources in the USA and relocating GDR citizens to the ‘operational area’. Operation ‘Aufbau’ (XV 3716/73) was launched for these ends. In January 1974, the file on A-source ‘Hampe’ (XV 15/74), an American political scientist who was conducting research into issues related to peaceful coexistence, was created. He regularly came to Europe, including Eastern Europe, in order to attend academic symposia. It was as late as 1975 that he turned into an invaluable source, if not the most significant of the department. However, they could never prove if he was a double agent or not. The steady family man would come to the GDR once or twice a year in order to get his reports recorded on tape. He was not linked to any instructor or case officer and received no more than a cover address. From 1986 he stopped reporting. The information he provided throughout the 1970s contributed to six evaluations of Department VII (the latest in 1977), and thus reached the leadership of the socialist party. The fact that only two of the 93 pieces of information received from him until 1986 were awarded grade II status is negligible. Half of the reports were documents covering a broad variety of issues. Repeatedly, they contained analyses, cases and studies on events that took place in the USA. Several documents of the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission of the USA from August 1980 were considered ‘very valuable’. The KGB participated in the information provided in 22 cases.

Private detective ‘Jack’ (XV 43/77) from Alexandria/Virginia proved strong in supplying the HVA XI with information, especially from 1979 to 1982. The 48 pieces of information he handed over between 1978 and August 1985 were predominantly of mediocre significance, although the majority (71 per cent) were documents. ‘Jack’s’ details played no role in the HVA analyses. However, the KGB showed permanent interest and received nearly all of the information (87 per cent). ‘Jack’ covered a broad range of issues—however, the American assessment of Soviet military policy proved a consistent theme. He also attended various conferences, including one on the US Air Force intelligence service on Soviet military policy in the 1980s. One of the truly outstanding pieces of secret intelligence was a six-page

document on the military-strategic considerations of the US Navy for the Indian Pacific region as well as a 35-page analysis by US intelligence on Soviet relations toward Cyprus. Both of these documents were considered to be 'valuable' by the HVA analysts.

A-source 'Dupont', an American technician, is likely to have temporarily been both the most significant and the oldest source of the department alongside 'Lore' (XV 4277/64). The operation was already underway in 1964. 'Dupont' repeatedly reported on the American Ordnance Association. In many cases throughout his 53 reports, he was able to give precise data on weapons technology—for instance, on the coating of missile heads or artillery projectile shells produced by Calspan Inc., New York. He also had a sound knowledge of some military developments of the USA, e.g. the cruise missile. New developments in military technology were also the topic of his last known delivery in 1981.

HVA Department XI/4 dealt with the Representation of the USA at the United Nations and the 'legally covered residencies' in the USA. It was in charge of the 'legally covered residencies' in the embassies of the GDR in Washington and in Mexico City. The most important source of Department XI/4 was the 2nd Secretary and press attaché of the Representation of the GDR at the UN, 'Hempel' (XV 1914/73). He accounts for 216 pieces of information from the period between March 1974 and May 1989, few of them documents (16). Still, 23 of his reports, which mostly assessed American politics, contributed to analyses for the SED leadership. The officer on special mission, *Offizier im besonderen Einsatz* (OibE), with the codename 'Sommer' (XV 6640/80), who apparently worked in the GDR Embassy in the USA, delivered 196 pieces of information, 100 of them documents, between April 1981 and June 1985. They comprised information as delicate as the field manual of the US armed forces, speeches held in Congress, the phone book of the Pentagon and a table of the generals and admirals of US Army, Air Force and Navy. The third rank is taken by the former assistant at the FSU Jena, 'Pfeil' (XV 2438/74), who apparently worked in the GDR Embassy in the USA and provided 187 pieces of information. They are from the period between April 1979 and January 1989 and deal with American domestic and foreign policies. Of his reports, 28 were rated as 'valuable'.

The HVA XI/5 focused on operations against the US forces in Europe, especially the military objects in Heidelberg (USAREUR), Stuttgart (USEUCOM), Ramstein and Kaiserslautern. It also filtered out American citizens and students of the University of Heidelberg who visited the GDR. The unit recorded the objects of 'Camp', 'Mensa' and 'Pat'. The top asset of XI/5 was the information source 'Antos' (XV 302/82), an American citizen who worked at a school in Heidelberg. She delivered 193 documents from January 1986 to April 1989. They included files relating to the military police or the 116-page *Chemical Reference Handbook*. The non-German 'Mike' (XV 2416/85) delivered, from July 1985 to November 1987, 142 pieces of information, usually quite extensive copies of military technical analyses, such as the 120-page draft 'Reforger Cortain Strike 87', information on the exercise Reforger 84 and the 'Employment of Atomic Demolition Ammunition'. The source 'Konrad' (II 263/73) was a medical-technical assistant at USAREUR in Heidelberg, and reported from September 1982 to March 1985, mainly on the peace movement, primarily in West Berlin.

The HVA XI/6 was (presumably) an operational outside group of the HVA XI, which was responsible for evaluation questions within the Academy of Sciences (AdW) of the GDR. Officially it was called the 'AdW service sector' and was placed in the Lychenerstraße in Prenzlauer Berg in East Berlin. For the HVA, the currently unidentified object 'photo F (XV 7456/60) is listed.

The HVA XI/7 coordinated the operational interests of the HVA, under the cover of the East German Ministry of Foreign Affairs and American Studies in the GDR, particularly at the AdW, the Institute for International Politics and Economics (IPW) and the Institute for International Relations in Potsdam Babelsberg (IIB). The three main sources of Unit XI/7 were GDR citizens. In the period from November 1975 to October 1987, 'Siegel' (XV 2105/73) delivered 396 analyses and pieces of information. Particularly, his thoughts on conceptual ideas and recommendations of the Policy Planning Staff in the State Department were considered 'very valuable'. Fourteen of his reports were used for analyses for the SED leadership. Since February 1962, 'Assistant' (XV 349/62) cooperated with the HVA. He was also an America expert and from June 1974 to May 1989 delivered a total of 320

pieces of information. 'Jörg' (XV 10874/60), connected with the HVA since September 1956, was responsible for the analysis of American domestic and foreign policy—for example, issues of the interaction of the NSC, the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department and the International Security Department of the Pentagon. In the period from July 1973 to May 1989, he delivered 281 pieces of information.

The HVA XI/8 was responsible for operations against a 'university', probably—given the character of the sources—an American university. 'Jimmy' (XV 117/68) was the most important source of Unit XI/8 and was active from September 1969 to February 1976. Of his 164 pieces of information, 146 were original documents, which indicates his significance. He provided information about the work programme of the foreign affairs committee of the House of Representatives, the sub-committee on International Security and Scientific Affairs, as well as military strategic studies of the foreign ministry of Chile. These findings were used in 32 reports for the SED leadership. A source of lesser relevance was 'Sekretär' (XV 6989/75), who worked at the East German trade mission in Washington. During the period December 1976 to February 1984 she delivered 75 pieces of information, mainly about the US economy. 'Bernhard' (XV 4098/76) had obvious access to a research centre in West Berlin; the information is predominantly from the period October 1979 to February 1982.

The HVA XI/9 operated against the American forces and citizens in West Berlin and the US military mission in Potsdam. Most of the information provided for the HVA XI/9 was reported by 'Stamm' (XV 4434/60). During the period of September 1969 to April 1985, 249 pieces of information came together, which were predominantly protocols of the FDP parliamentary group, as well as cabinet proposals for the federal government. In 38 cases, this information was passed on to the SED leadership. The source 'Ingrid' (XV 6402/82) worked as a secretary in the senate in West Berlin, and from December 1982 to May 1989 relayed 194 pieces of information, mainly on inner-German relations. The source 'Roland' (XV 4608/75) was an employee at the US Mission in West Berlin, and in the period of April 1979 to May 1989, he delivered 192 pieces of information. Among these are the phone book of the US Command in West

Berlin, military training plans and elaborations on the storage of hazardous materials from USAREUR.

The case of Eberhard Lüttich

In the 1970s and 1980s, the HVA XI/1 attempted to infiltrate the US. Sources were supposed to be created that would relay information about American policy and the economy. The resettlement of the agent Eberhard Lüttich ('Brest') in the United States under a double identity was equal to a pilot project, but did not work out. Below is an attempt at a reconstruction of the operation.

Eberhard Lüttich would be 70 years old if he were still alive in 2009 and he would still bear the name he received in his first life in Leipzig. He was born on 16 April 1939. Part of this first life was the fact that he was named after his foster parents, the family Sch.⁶ At the age of ten, he took the name of his mother, Lüttich, who had passed away when he was just one year old. When he started working for the MfS, for four years, he took on the working name of Eberhard Reinhard. He provided his date of birth as 15 May 1939. This birth date is fictitious. Even the official birth date of Eberhard Sch or Lüttich is not certain because the foster parents did not know his exact birth date.

When he moved to the Federal Republic, he started his 'second life' in Hamburg on 3 October 1972 as Hans S. from Anklam, giving his date of birth as 9 August 1937. After a ten-year odyssey that led him—in accordance with his orders—to New York, he landed in Hamburg in November 1979 and was then arrested. Meanwhile, officials determined that S. was not his real name as he had admitted in the interrogations. He then identified himself as Eberhard Reinhard from Leipzig, date of birth: 15 May 1939.

His 'third life' began in 1980 in the US, again using a cover identity under which he still lives today. This is hidden for obvious reasons, as well as his current place of residence or his alleged birthplace. After all, in his 'third life' the birth date is classified information—up to the year 2039. By then, Eberhard Lüttich will have celebrated his 100th birthday.

The ‘first life’ began for Eberhard Lüttich as it did for many after the war. After school followed work in a big factory, which earned him the chance to study at the University of Domestic Trade in Leipzig, and in 1962, he received his diploma. He ended up in the Consumer Cooperative organization in Römhild, which was in the district of Suhl. Here, he was first discovered as an unofficial staff member and, within a year, he joined the regional MfS as a second lieutenant. Soon, he came to work in intelligence in Department XV, where he immediately was noticed⁷—partly because of his operative creativity, his good connections to the people involved in his 23 operations,⁸ and partly also because of his exceptional empathy and his readable reports. He was unmarried, had almost no relatives and believed in the GDR. Because of this, he was transferred to the HVA headquarters in Berlin. In 1968, they called him into Department III, which was also responsible for Central and South America.⁹ The head of the department, Colonel Horst Jänicke, informed him that he should get ready for a future use in the United States, where the HVA planned to place him undercover for the next 15 years. The preparations took three years.¹⁰ He learned to live under a false identity, received extensive radio training, and practised the use of dead letter boxes—the usual programme. Initially administered in small doses, he became familiar with the ‘operational area’. First, a one-day visit to West Berlin, then a few days in Hamburg, a month in Zurich, then six weeks—because of the language—in London. In this way he became acclimatized, habituated to Western life and Western clothes.

Through his training, Lüttich slipped into the skin of the ‘West German’ Hans S. This meant a life as an ‘illegal’, as it was called, and it earned him a promotion to the rank of captain.¹¹ Formally, he resigned in March of 1969 from the MfS—as it was lapidary recognized—and was, henceforth, known as OibE ‘Brest’ (XV 317/69). Half a year before he resettled, he made himself familiar with the life stations of Hans S. and waited for the moment when the real S. moved secretly into the GDR. Also Lüttich had to learn Hans S.’s profession as a worker in a steel factory.

It had taken the HVA XI/1 a long time to find a suitable identity for Lüttich, and they finally found it in Hans S., who had a girlfriend in East Berlin. The real Hans S. worked in the Federal Republic as a crane operator and

electrician. He fell in love with an East German woman and visited her every two or three weeks in East Berlin. They met in a secret apartment, as the HVA wanted as much information as possible about the real Hans S., using appropriate technology. He was outwardly similar to Lüttich, so he was suitable as a double. Hans S. was persuaded to resettle secretly in the GDR so he could marry his girlfriend. In May 1972, Lüttich had the chance to observe him unobtrusively. Only the mother of the genuine Hans S. knew that her son had resettled in the GDR, but he was able to keep her quiet.

The cover story was developed by Eberhard Kopprasch,¹² one of the experts of the legendary group S (Security), who later was 2nd Secretary of the Permanent Mission of the GDR in Bonn. Lüttich was supposed to say he was to be employed in Moscow at the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. He was supplied with a forged passport but a real birth certificate, and documentation for refugee status after the war, real school and work certificates, and even a union membership card. Equipped with these, the new Hans S. was born, and the life of Lüttich 'ended' at 33. He did not exist anymore. Hans S. lived twice: the real one in East Berlin, the false one, starting on 3 October 1972, in Hamburg.

The real Hans S. never went to university, which was the reason the new one worked initially as a warehouse worker in order to study business administration on the side. The acclimatization was good and he was to spend his annual leave in the summer of 1973 in the US, in Manhattan. East Berlin welcomed his decision to work for Schenker-Logistics, which maintained branches in Germany and in the United States. On 18 November 1973, he made the big step: he got work at Schenker and left for the US, hiring a room as a lodger in West End Avenue in New York. After the formalities of required for health insurance, he had a valid license and acquired a green card. Although he was fully legalized, he had to become accustomed to his new workplace and also to American culture, which was so unlike either East or West Germany's. East Berlin headquarters gave him a good six months to establish himself in America and ordered him to find and marry a suitable woman in order to become an American citizen, which he did.¹³ At the same time, he was to set up intelligence landmarks by opening dead letter boxes and technically preparing radio contact.

In the fifth year of his operational deployment, he was ordered to obtain an official overview of military transports between the US and Europe, which was organized by Schenker. Similarly, he had to find interesting contacts, especially among students.¹⁴ He fulfilled this mission, just like the order to marry. At the time of his arrest, the Lüttich operation was still in the development phase, and was just beginning to deliver informative fruits.

Finally, the HVA XI/1 succeeded. Within ten years—from the initial training steps to real operational work—they had installed an OibE under the pseudonym of ‘Brest’¹⁵ from Suhl in the heart of a key object of the military-industrial complex in New York. This was initially as a clerk to the assistant vice president of Schenker, responsible for the Middle East, Western Europe, Japan and the Far East. The position had an annual salary of \$32,000.¹⁶

‘Brest’ spent a lot of time learning communication methods, though the primary contact method was personal meetings. During his vacation in 1974 he was in East Berlin, but later, in September 1975, there were more meetings in third countries because of signs of enemy countermeasures (film teams, shadings, intense passport control). The alleged shading proved to be an undercover stress-related symptom of Lüttich. Beside the meetings in East Berlin, he also travelled to Vienna, Montreal, Hamburg, New York, Mexico City or the Bahamas.¹⁷

The focus of reporting was the legalization phase, including daily issues such as attending sporting events. Such information was always desired by the HVA for the enlargement of their ‘knowledge of the regime’.

Since 1976 he had sent information to a false West German address, but he could also call there as the owners were MfS resettlement agents used for that purpose.¹⁸

A second route consisted of dead letter drops of which he arranged seven, though only one was used. It was a section of wood panelling in a Chinese restaurant in Manhattan on Trinity Place—codename ‘Orient’. There, he put the message or the micro negatives into a Marlboro box, which served as a container. To show that he had used or emptied a dead letter box, he showed

a piece of coloured paper, which he stuck in a gap beside a telephone on the third floor of the World Trade Center. The content of the dead letter box was then collected by an agent who officially worked in the GDR Mission to the United Nations.

The third way of communication was, from 1977 onwards, a radio, using devices for deciphering documents. Initially, a Cuban frequency broadcast spoken numbers. From October 1978 onwards, an East German frequency took over with Morse code. The HVA researched and developed this last possibility for years—and it stunned the Western intelligence services when it was noticed. In this one-way radio communication, Lüttich had received a call number 149. Every 14 days he checked whether or not there were messages for him on the radio. Seventeen radio messages were sent to him, he actually received 12 up to his capture.¹⁹

Finally, he had a secret micro camera and invisible ink. He once sent a test micro negative, which he had glued into a book. As a sender he always used Jewish names that he took from a phone book.

The meetings were, nonetheless, important. In the spring of 1977 in Mexico City, the instructor told him that the HVA XI/1 had its eye on an American PhD student at Harvard University, as well as one from Boston. He thought that Lüttich should run these operations. Signals at meetings in the ‘operational area’ were as follows: open jacket meant ‘there are problems’; closed jacket and directions to the Goethe Institute, the use of the word ‘idol’, a Marlboro cigarette offered (with a pack of cigarettes upside down) and a certain key chain signalled that contact could be made without problems.

The HVA XI/1 had ideas about what kind of wife the false Hans S. had to find. The American woman should have a prominent position, be intelligent and willing to cooperate with the East German service in a relevant position. But love, almost one of the greatest risks in intelligence operations, worked in mysterious ways. At the company he met a Cuban expatriate immediately after he had entered the US. She fell short of the expectations of East Berlin and when he was ordered, for self-protection, to marry, he did so, but took the wrong wife. Worse still, Lüttich did not want to involve her in the intelligence work nor make her operationally useful.

Only at a meeting in February 1977 in Mexico City did he reveal who he had married. Even later, the case officer of the HVA found out that the wife had the wrong political attitudes—she was active against Castro’s Cuba. Lüttich had good reason to keep this hidden from his instructor. The relationship between the HVA and Lüttich moved then into a critical phase, but it was clear that the HVA had to reluctantly accept this new situation. Nevertheless, East Berlin was interested in being introduced to Lüttich’s wife. Under the cover story of visiting the East Department of Schenker, he brought her with him to the GDR. In July 1978, they stayed in Lehnitz, visiting an alleged business contact. An open introduction obviously did not happen, especially since she did not try to hide her attitude toward Communism. And even later it did not happen, because she became pregnant. She only knew Lüttich under his false identity and presumably nothing about his job and past.²⁰

In the GDR, the real Hans S. received some attention. His correspondence, any visitors and even his behaviour at work were controlled by the MfS, and they also helped in private matters. With his wife he moved to Wismar and had a daughter. Mail to the mother in the Federal Republic regularly should have been intercepted by the MfS, but sometimes it got through. Despite all the secrecy it became known in his previous environment, as well as to his mother, that he lived in Wismar, was married and had become a father. The existence of the second Hans S. was noticed by the West German counter-intelligence agency (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*, BfV) in its operation ‘Anmeldung’, and they clearly suspected an intelligence service’s planning behind this.²¹ The real Hans S. became discontent with the GDR and passionately fought for his right to leave the country again, which was possible only after the fall of the Berlin Wall.²² He probably did not know that he was an ‘identity donor’ until the uncovering of the false Hans S.

The BfV should have, at the latest in April 1979, succeeded in unmasking the false Hans S. An arrest warrant must have been issued, because Lüttich was arrested at Hamburg airport on 16 November 1979. He admitted immediately, recalls one of the investigators involved, not being Hans S., but Eberhard Reinhard. Otherwise, he remained silent. Who he really was, nobody knew at that time, but on the other hand, nobody had any doubts

that he was an employee of the GDR's secret service.²³ With this catch, the BfV had uncovered an unknown variation of infiltration in the US.

Eberhard Lüttich started his 'third life' a few days after his arrest. Because the documents relating to the next stage of his life remain classified, the story remains speculative. In any case, he seemed to have turned his back on the HVA, negotiated a deal in the US, volunteered to work for an American institution like the FBI or CIA and returned to his family in the US.²⁴

Did he spill the beans to American intelligence or counter-intelligence? One has to suppose he did, because he could travel approximately six months later to the US and to his family. What could he talk about? First of all, he could reveal the communications system. This seems very likely since the owners of his cover address in Externa were later arrested and sentenced to 20 months on probation for providing a 'cover address for a very dangerous agent'.²⁵

The second exposure attributed to him is that of a secretary 'Gitta' (XV 3211/67) in the SPD group in the city council in Bonn, whom he had contacted during his time in Suhl.²⁶ Further exposures did not appear in the media and were not heard in court.

Thus, Eberhard Lüttich probably did not completely admit having been involved in other operations in his time in Suhl—at least 22. A hot tip would have been the file of the OibE 'Rat' (XV 2834/68), whom he instructed himself during his Suhl time and whom he met as an employee of a logistics company again in New York in the World Trade Center. This example suggests that Lüttich—at least after his arrest in Germany—did not reveal all his operational knowledge.

The HVA had to expect his 'betrayal'. Remarkably, they nonetheless continued endangered operations. Apart from the aforementioned 'Council', there was an operation including an engineer, 'Wolfgang' (XV 3211/67), from Erkrath, whose file was not closed before September 1986. Similarly, steps to control the damage would have needed to be taken, had his assumed contact to a professor at the Technical University in Darmstadt

(XV 3211/67) become known, but this was not the case. In November 1978, the operation was already closed, a fact that was most likely unknown to Lüttich.

The former Eberhard Lüttich now lives in the United States and has not yet responded to an interview request. The operation was uncovered thanks to analytical investigations of the West German counter-intelligence agency. The HVA contact that Lüttich exposed only had to accept probation penalties. The real Hans S. probably suffered emotionally because it was personal love, not that of country, that had directed him to the GDR.

Final remarks

The analysis of the three political departments—HVA I, HVA II and HVA XI and the 75 top sources shows two results: first, to summarize, the HVA had a considerable amount of insider knowledge about West German politics; and second, the peak of operational activity in the period from 1969 to 1989 was in the 1970s. They were unable to compensate the operative losses of the 1980s with new sources—with some variation depending on the respective department.

This assessment rests on the following observations: alone in December 1988, the HVA I had a network of 103 Federal German IMs and more than 11 nonGerman IMs and contact persons. The network of the HVA I procured approximately 10,363 pieces of information about the whole West German government in the last two decades, while the number of original documents was high (5,412). Almost every twentieth piece of information (435) received the very rare rating of ‘very valuable’. The image of the HVA II is similar. In December 1988, it controlled 95 German and nine non-German agents and contact persons. In the years 1969–1989, the HVA II procured 17,421 pieces of information, obviously more than the HVA I, among them almost every third (5,770) being an original document. The percentage of ‘very valuable’ information is strikingly low with 137. The HVA XI consisted of 101 West Germans and 56 nonGerman agents and contact persons. They operatively procured 16,119 pieces of information, nearly half of them were documents (7,236) and 364 were considered to be ‘very valuable’. The operations of the HVA XI against the US were

significantly more effective than hitherto generally accepted. These statistics also show overall high-quality and excellent information-gathering, with a total of 299 West German agents in December 1988, also a formidable network.

When studied more closely, the network reveals that the HVA 1/1 and 1/2 for decades had a stable network of sources in the Foreign Ministry, as well as in—or around—the federal government. The HVA I/3 had hopeful young agents in the Foreign Ministry, like ‘Angelika’ (XV 494/76). On the other side, the network supposed to infiltrate the West German BMI was not operationally powerful. Sources such as ‘Leo’ (XV 4426/65) or an unknown source XV 219/63 ended their operational work in April 1975 and March 1984, losses which could not be compensated. The most powerful unit, HVA I/5, was clearly ageing, with sources like ‘Fichtel’ (XV 18243/60), who had been spying for almost 40 years coming to the end of his agent career.

The picture of the HVA II units, which were responsible for political parties in West Germany, is not uniform. Significant weaknesses were shown by the example of HVA II/1, which was responsible for the conservative political landscape and HVA II/3, which was responsible for right-wing extremism. The strongest sources of information, ‘Tusch’ (XV 3058/75), dried up in November 1987, ‘Herta’ (XV 1087/67) in February 1979 and ‘Iltis’ (XV 8661/61) in December 1978. The HVA II could obviously not compensate these losses. This was a serious problem, since the conservative party had been heading the West German government since 1982. Also, the intelligence work against the FDP had suffered several defeats: ‘Anna’ (XV 2872/62) resigned in July 1985 and ‘Olaf’ (XV 4604/60) in September 1986. Of the leading trio, only the journalist ‘Auto’ (XV 8618/61) remained until the end. The HVA II/3 was never really successful in infiltrating the right-wing parties. Thus, the success of the units HVA II/1 to II/3 was clearly in the seventies. The HVA II/4 was positioned differently within the SPD. With ‘Max’ (XV 1628/68), they lost in September 1987 a top source, but the remaining network was extremely well placed. This also applies to the HVA II/5, which worked on the unions with some deficits and for the HVA II/6, which was responsible for the operative work against the Green Party.

HVA XI espionage against the US happened mostly using the Federal Republic of Germany as a base, an advantage which also accounts for the successful resettlement in the here-described case of Eberhard Lüttich. However, soon each unit of the HVA XI had to accept the reality of suffering losses. The source couple 'Bernd' and 'Angela' (XV 366/77) of the HVA XI/1 dried out in May 1982, the top source of the HVA XI/2, 'Erich' (XV 47/68) in November 1987 and 'Jack' (XV 43/77) from the HVA XI/3 in August 1985. The list could be continued. It is obvious that the legally covered infiltrations into the US in the East German embassy or the GDR's Representation at the UN in information-gathering had gained in importance. There are also fluctuations in the source network due to the fact that American citizens recruited in West Germany were members of the armed forces stationed there for a limited period of time, and it was too difficult to stabilize these connections. Nevertheless, the HVA XI was able to secure an information level which is comparable to that of the HVA I.

Despite the huge operational costs, a considerable volume of information and a broad network, the HVA of the GDR could not procure strategic advantages, namely secure the existence of the state. In this respect, they failed to accomplish their mission.

Notes

1 Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit*, Part 1, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1996. Material for this chapter comes from the 'Rosenholz' files and SIRA of the departments listed.

2 Helmut Müller-Enbergs, 'Rosenhoh': *Eine Quellenkritik*, Berlin: BstU, 2007, pp. 36–125.

3 Stephan Konopatzky, 'Das System der Information und Recherche', in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu...*, Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003.

4 Extensive descriptions of any HVA unit have been published. Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für*

Staatssicherheit, Part 2, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1998, pp. 198–278.
Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit*, Part 3, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2008, pp. 144–238, 875–946.

5 Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 94–102.

6 Wherever there is no source reference given, details are based on interviews with two persons who were directly involved in the operation, who wish to stay anonymous.

7 Eberhard Lüttich; BStU, ZA, Kaderkarteikartei.

8 Eberhard Lüttich; BStU, ZA, SIRA Database 21.

9 Werner Kahl, 'DDR-Agentenführer arbeitet jetzt für Bonn', *Die Welt*, 5 September 1980.

10 Manfred Schell, 'Die steile Karriere eines Ostspions', *Die Welt*, 22 December 1979.

11 Werner Kahl, 'Spion aus New York', *Die Welt*, 16 September 1980.

12 About the person Eberhard Kopprasch, see Helmut Müller-Enbergs, Jan Wielgoths and Dieter Hoffmann (eds), *Wer war wer in der DDR: Ein Lexikon ostdeutscher Biographien*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2006, p. 543.

13 Werner Kahl, 'Spion aus New York'.

14 Markus Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, London: Trafalgar Square, 1997, p. 291.

15 Frank E. Lippold, 'Neue Runde im Tauziehen um Spionageakten', *Berliner Morgenpost*, 5 January 1999, p. 6.

16 Klaus Eichner (ed.), *Kundschafter im Westen. Spitzenquellen der Aufklärung*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 2003. Gotthold Schramm (ed.), *Der Botschaftsflüchtling und andere Agentengeschichten*, Berlin: Edition Ost,

2006. Wolfgang Hartmann, 'Johanna Olbrich', in Helmut Müller-Enbergs, Jan Wielgoß, Dieter Hoffmann, Andreas Herbst and Olaf W Reimann (eds), *Wer war wer in der DDR. Ein Lexikon ostdeutscher Biographien*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 2006, p. 749.

17 Werner Kahl, 'Spion aus New York'.

18 Werner Kahl, 'DDR-Agentenführer in den USA übergelaufen'.

19 Markus Wolf, *Man Without a Face*, p. 291. Werner Kahl, 'Spion aus New York'.

20 Werner Kahl, 'Spion aus New York'.

21 Manfred Schell, 'Die steile Karriere eines Ostspions'.

22 BStU, ASt Rostock, AKG 260, Bl. 275 and 322. BStU, ASt Rostock, AKG 271, Bl. 2 and 43.

23 'Mehrere Spione der, DDR gingen ins Netz', *Berliner Morgenpost*, 23 November 1979. 'Zwei neue Spione', *Bild*, 23 November 1979. '5 Falle!', *Express*, Köln, 23 November 1979. 'Zwei Westdeutsche als DDR-Spione verhaftet', *Die Presse*, Vienna, 24 November 1979.

24 Werner Kahl, 'DDR-Agentenführer arbeitet jetzt für Bonn'. Reuter, 'Spionageprozess', 17 September 1980. Reuter, 'Spionageprozess', 19 September 1980. 'DDR-Spion ein freier Mann', *Aachener Nachrichten*, 20 September 1980.

25 Manfred Schell, 'Die steile Karriere eines Ostspions'. 'Auf freiem Fuß', *Berliner Morgenpost*, 20 September 1980.

26 Gefaßt, 'Zwei neue Spione!'. '5 Falle!', *Express*. 'Der Verdacht löste sich in Luft auf: Bonner Sekretärin keine Spionin', *Kölnische Rundschau*, 24 November 1979. Heinz Vielain, 'DDR-Spion verriet andere Agenten', *Die Welt*, 27 November 1979.

7

Active measures and disinformation as part of East Germany's propaganda war, 1953–1972

Michael F.Scholz

Before its international acceptance in 1972/1973, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) had limited use of the classic tools of diplomacy because the Federal Republic claimed to be the sole representative of Germany. As a result, GDR foreign affairs policy tried to use all possibilities to repress the international influence of the Federal Republic, to break international isolation and to gain acceptance as a new Germany. International acceptance finally meant stabilizing the SED dictatorship on the inside. In addition, it was a permanent issue of GDR foreign policy to support matters of Soviet foreign policy, and to promote this so-called 'revolution' in world processes.^{[1](#)}

Foreign Country Propaganda had a special position in this state of affairs, which included elements of psychological warfare. Foreign Country Propaganda completely followed foreign policy and it was not only openly operated (white), but also half-hidden (gray) and completely hidden (black). GDR propaganda directed at the West was intuitionally based on different columns. Albert Norden, chief of propaganda, was the tone setter for the SED leadership. Norden was not only a member of the SED political office, but also head of agitation and the Western Commission. On top of this, he was also responsible for the Central Committee (CC) Department for Foreign Country Information. The CC Department for Agitation and Propaganda and the press office at the Council of Ministers, under the leadership of Kurt Blecha, had further designing influence. From the beginning, the Ministry of State Security (MfS) department 'agitation' under Günter Halle set the tone. In the 1960s they were pushed more aside by Department X of the *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung* (HVA) under Rolf Wagenbreth.

By the early 1950s there was cooperation between foreign country propaganda and the secret intelligence service in the GDR. Different parts of the Ministry of State Security supported the foreign country propaganda in form (secret placements, agents and other active methods) and content. Psychological warfare and disinformation were part of the GDR foreign and German policy from the beginning.²

In the Communist movement, hidden propaganda, including disinformation, had a long tradition. Examples are the books *Braunbuch über Reichstagsbrand und Hitlerterror* (1933), *Hitler treibt zum Krieg* (1934) and *Das braune Netz* (1935), which were published by the media empire of Willi Münzenberg. All three contained introductions by non-Communist authors from the West.

The Soviet Secret Service (KGB), took care of this tradition. Even in the days of the Tscheka, the service had a disinformation office. This office became more important and expanded as a department for political disinformation in 1959 when the KGB was reorganized. This was carried out with a purpose—to give the leadership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) better opportunities to influence the West under the conditions of the policy of peaceful coexistence.³

Anti-fascism and socialistic foreign propaganda

At the end of 1959, graffiti with swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans on the newly built Synagogue of Cologne, together with other actions in various West German cities, gave the SED leadership reasons to modify and sharpen their ideological offensive under the code ‘Antifascism against the assumed “re-Nazify Federal Republic”’. The graffiti was one of the first actions of the KGB Department D, which stood for for political disinformation, which was founded in the same year. Comparable parallel actions took place in various Western European cities.⁴ Accusations were made at the time that those actions had been launched by the KGB and the MfS. MfS files support this claim: ‘Methods, which are able ...to provoke psychological reactions in the area of the opponent’ described ‘realization of graffiti in the area of the opponent’.⁵

From about the middle of the 1950s, antifascism took a central place in the GDR's foreign country propaganda. The recent past of the Federal Republic opened the possibility for working under the flag of anti-fascism to legitimize their own state, as well as to run down the reputation of the 'State of Bonn', and indirectly paved the way for the international acceptance of the GDR.⁶ Even when GDR propaganda supported the call for joint German talks in the middle of the 1950s, 'the revival of the Militarism and Fascism of West Germany' was publicly denounced.⁷ This went together with the concrete purpose of foreign policy and propaganda to isolate the government of Bonn, to provoke political crises in the Federal Republic and collect—according to the SED—the anti-fascism forces.⁸ The first big campaign was directed against the 'Bloody Judges of West German Justice'.⁹

The political propaganda campaigns were prepared with militaristic accuracy by the 'Committee for German Unity'. Since 1954 this official government organ published various policy publications for Germany, especially to spread them in the Federal Republic. They all described a 're-Nazifying Federal Republic' and complained that the Federal Republic under the government of Konrad Adenauer divided Germany.¹⁰ The leader for the campaign policy was Albert Norden (1904–1982), also the first head of the committee.¹¹ When Norden gave up his leadership in 1955 as a member of the SED-political office, he continued to be responsible for agitation and led the commission, which in the 1960s coordinated all methods and matters in the GDR to emphasize the war and Nazi crimes. The MfS and its foreign intelligence unit played a considerable part in getting material for these campaigns and any information about old, active Nazis in high positions in West Germany. Both were important for the *Brown Book* campaigns.¹²

The fabricated Swastika graffiti enabled the GDR foreign country propaganda to point out a concrete danger, which came from the alleged aggressive, imperialistic and revanchist policy of the Bonn government. An SED political office decision requested in 1959 to mobilize 'the widest masses in all countries to fight against the German militarism and imperialism'. A central purpose of the propaganda was to raise the 'international reputation of the GDR' and to strengthen and broaden its

‘international positions’. Therefore, foreign countries should be informed about the character of the state power in the GDR, its ‘economical successes’ and its ‘peaceful foreign policy’. For the northern European countries, which were assumed to be key countries, the motto ‘Baltic Sea—Sea of Peace’ was approved as the central slogan. With this slogan, requests were demanded for a nuclear-weapon-free Baltic Sea and the development of a trade and cultural exchange, along with a strong agitation against the military presence of NATO, especially in the Federal Republic in the Baltic Sea area.¹³

The goal of the polemic against the Federal Republic was announced, so Norden had a meeting to carry ‘disturbance and disintegration’ into the realm of the opponent, to restrain parts of its power, complicate coalitions and isolate the Federal Republic. At the same time, the GDR presented itself as an anti-military state of peace.¹⁴ Obviously, they were not afraid of falsifying files. Such decisions were made at the highest level. The campaigns were centrally organized from Norden’s office and were guided with the help of detailed ‘Campaign Plans’. They contained everything, down to the last detail: goals, responsibilities, procedures, material input and questions about coordination. It was defined in the plans who in the GDR had to contact who in the Federal Republic or other countries and how it should happen. Normally they depended on active sympathizers and help organizations in the West, and also a well-built network of instructors from the GDR.¹⁵

Inside the MfS in 1954, an independent service unit under Günter Halle was founded to run its public relations and special propaganda unit. This also included disinformation campaigns in the West.¹⁶ Indeed, Halle had ambitions to defy the party (Albert Norden).¹⁷ He also tried to get the political active methods within a central agitation group under his direction.¹⁸

As a result, Markus Wolf, the head of the HVA, saw the influence of the HVA threatened and appealed against it. However, he had no objections if the agitations department also used active measures alongside the HVA. A central planning and coordination division could manage this. The research and analysis could be done by agitation, as well as the technical department

for fake documents (West paper department, use of typewriters and others). However, in 1963 there still was no agreement.^{[19](#)}

In the propaganda war of the East, the main weapons were the National Socialist (NS) files, which were kept in the Soviet domain and were split into various archives. Not only did the Soviet Union keep itself covered on this question, but the other brother states also did not play with an open deck regarding the question of files. The GDR alone seemed interested in a cross-country collection and analysis of all NS files. Under the pretence of NS criminal prosecution, the GDR chekists tried with varied success, 'to get a foot in the door in the Eastern archives'.^{[20](#)} Parallel to this, the State Archive of the GDR worked to establish cooperation between Eastern archives to seek out documents of German provenance from World War II.^{[21](#)}

With this cooperation, disinformation became more and more important and increased in quality. Disinformation meant different things to different people. At the beginning, the goal was to manipulate the secret service of another country with false, adulterated information. In the dictionary of the MfS disinformation is defined as 'consciously diffusing facts basically or partly contradicting information by words, writings, pictures or acts'.^{[22](#)} Practical disinformation offers different kinds of political influence against the opponent.

Disinformation from the KGB lead the secret services of the Warsaw Pact further than traditional espionage and double games. This was apparent in 1964 with operation 'Neptune', run under the leadership of the Czechoslovakia Secret Service. The service sunk iron boxes in the 'Black Lake' at the German-Czechoslovakia border. In May 1964, while Western correspondents were present, the files were conveniently found and it was assumed they were secret files from Nazi times. They were probably real files, but they only received worldwide attention after their discovery.^{[23](#)}

Anti-fascism became more and more of a cure for all problems. It functioned in the socialist states as a central motive for espionage in foreign countries, which the Soviet Union admitted for the first time at the end of 1964, after the fall of CPSU head Nikita Krushchev. Anti-fascism was used

as a motive not only for Richard Sorge and the Red Orchestra spy ring, but also for spies like Rudolf Abel and Gordon Lonsdale. The Soviet publications said that Abel's espionage activities were motivated by his personal desire to 'neutralize' the activities of the fascist criminals who were integrated in the West. The US Secret Service thought Lonsdale's memoirs were disinformation since they were only published in Britain and not the Soviet Union, and described his fight against former Nazis in British Services.^{[24](#)}

Before 1965 cooperation between the Warsaw Pact secret services was limited to an exchange of information. After the information provided by Ladislav Bittman, a Czech disinformation specialist who switched sides to the West in 1968, disinformation departments in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the GDR 'began to exchange basic material for special operations, cooperating to work out falsifications and help operations of the partner department in another country'.^{[25](#)}

The HVA Department X ('active measures')

In the spring of 1966, acting KGB head Viktor F.Gruschko ordered Markus Wolf to Moscow to increase the quality of active measures. It was said that an order came from the central committee of the CPSU 'to influence both internal and foreign policy in the Western European states flanking the activities of the government'.^{[26](#)} The direct result of this meeting on the 28 May 1966 was the founding of Department X in the HVA, created from Department VII F. The previous leader of this department, Rolf Wagenbreth, led the department until 1989.

In 1988 approximately 60 full-time employees worked in Department X, which was sub-divided into seven sub-departments. Department 1 had the task of disturbing the relationships of the Federal Republic in Western Europe, the third world and the US. Department 3 took care of active measure operation 'multipliers', which could be installed in the 'operational areas'. In 1988 there were 62 IMs alone listed in the Federal Republic of Germany.^{[27](#)} Clues of their tasks are found in an inventory at the BstU. Also, in 1989 more clues were found among the encrypted data banks of SIRA (System for Information Research of the HVA), and in the documents of the

secretary of the Minister of State Security, as well as in documents in the foreign intelligence department. In 2003, the Rosenholz material came to Germany from the US and included information about agents of the foreign department.^{[28](#)}

HVA Department X worked offensively to politically influence ‘operational areas’ with ‘active operations’. The word ‘active operations’ was taken over from the KGB into the services of the Warsaw Pact states. Letters, information services, official documents, books and studies that were created by Department X were sent into the operation area—primarily the Federal Republic, but also other Northern European countries—to people who played a role in the shaping of public opinion, such as politicians, scientists and, especially, journalists. Publishing companies were used as so-called ‘legal roofs’ in the operational areas, and also served as a flag for the recruitment of agents of all categories. The ‘active measures’ were mostly connected with ‘disinformation’ and ‘psychological warfare’ and were designed to bring shame to the opponent in order to disorganize and corrode them.^{[29](#)}

HVA Department X was strongly influenced by the experiences of psychological warfare from World War I and II, in particular the British experiences with ‘black propaganda’. In 1962 Sefton Delmers’ memoirs were also published in Hamburg. His pointed attacks in the *London Daily Express* against the rearming of the Federal Republic were extensively documented in the GDR.^{[30](#)}

HVA chief, Markus Wolf, ordered extraordinary secrecy and the founding in 1966. Twenty years later Wagenbreth finally got permission to recount the history. In his presentation at the espionage school in Belzig he left no doubt about the importance of Sefton Delmers for the work: ‘When somebody knows this book, he knows immediately that the Englishman was the so-called Godfather or a genius inverter of the “active measures” during the World War II.’ Wagenbreth almost tenderly described Delmers as ‘in his own view a little big, but also extraordinary genius’. He ‘combined all competencies in himself, which a good employee of the HVA should have to work on’. He described him as a ‘creative journalist, creative

manipulator, a well-spoken contact person, a cunning fox'. The Department X leader enriched his hymn of praise with concrete examples.³¹

The work of military defense (MA IIIB) during World War I provided inspiration for GDR disinformation.³² Students in the HVA's military history course studied World War I tactics, including press censorship and influence.³³ Germans already used hidden foreign propaganda. Normally, the publication material was intellectually or financially supported when it served their own interests. Articles from the alleged authors functioned especially well for newspapers often only as a 'middleman' to the editors and press offices. For the development of the propaganda, the German site depended on brochures to help naturalized citizens in the countries, to cloud the derivation of the brochures and to customize them for the behaviour of the recipients, because the German site naturally attempted to remain anonymous.³⁴ These activities provided the East Germans a model for disinformation during the Cold War.

Finally, inspiration also came from the opposing side, including the 'Führungsstab B/VIII'—psychological warfare—which started at the end of the 1950s in the Federal Defence Ministry. Its job included influencing the GDR.³⁵ Operatives also gained experience on the job. For example, they studied the Nazi files containing information about West German officials who worked in the Nazi Ministry for Foreign Affairs conducting propaganda campaigns.³⁶ A kind of guideline for psychological warfare published in 1961 by the GDR military publishing company described psychological warfare in four chapters. The main points covered psychological warfare before and during World War I and during the Third Reich. For a time after the war, NATO and the Federal Republic stood as the center point of interest. Inspiration came from the popular *A Psychological Warfare Casebook* by William E. Daugherty and Morris Jannowitz, published in 1958, a work often cited in footnotes.³⁷ More research needs to be done on the role of the Soviet Union in the development of this department.

The Nazi files treasure chest

Since 1955 and especially in the 1960s, the Soviet Union had transferred captured German files back to East Berlin. These files were ‘secured’ by the MfS and were not meant for scholarly use. Therefore, in 1968 the MfS set up their own Nazi archive—run by the MfS’ Department IX/11—for investigations. Sources and documents were seized from the Nazi period and systematically used for ‘political operational work’.^{[38](#)}

To make the archival material available to foreign journalists for use in campaigns against the politicians of the Federal Republic, the Council of Ministers decided to open a central documentation location (later the Documentation Centre of the State Archive Department) in May 1964. It soon held one million proven sources and had a complete overview of relevant materials.^{[39](#)} The Potsdam State Archive was also an important resource for Western journalists.

The HVA’s Department X, led by Wagenbreth, coordinated its work with the responsible leaders of the SED departments, international relations and agitation and propaganda. The last one was, among others, responsible for ‘white propaganda’. All campaigns were coordinated with the Soviet Union and were adapted for each special situation. During the early years, a main point of the work was the purchase and falsification of historical sources. Therefore, dossiers could be ‘completed’ through fabricated documents as needed. Sometimes Department X had to clear out files, which meant getting rid of material that exonerated people.^{[40](#)}

For the hidden placement of the material, Wagenbreth searched and found appropriate people to spread the propaganda in the West: ‘With simple means he got an overview of which groups and single people...were involved with the problem of coping with the past, who were critical and could influence public opinion.’^{[41](#)}

Two former employees of Department X wrote: ‘The Archives of the GDR were a useful “front” for the HVA.’

Under its protection, we could elicit in conversations what the political discussion in the operational area were like and set up many useful contacts.

Some conversations peripheral to the research being done at the archive could influence the opinions of the targeted person.

Young scholars with a promising career after finishing their education in the Western system were especially interesting. Their cooperation with GDR authors was effective and they functioned almost as ghost writers. Because the GDR and the MfS were not allowed to be recognized as senders, they searched for a Western author so a manuscript could be published in the 'operation area'.⁴² Inside and outside of the GDR, various scholarly works were to be invented with the help of the MfS. The border between scholarly and secret service work quickly merged.⁴³

Examples of anti-Nazi GDR propaganda in Sweden

The 'unmastered' past in the Federal Republic opened excellent possibilities for the GDR's ideological campaigns. It seemed like a good idea to extend this idea to other countries that were also dealing with an uncomfortable past, such as France.⁴⁴ This strategy would have not worked for Sweden before the end of the Cold War because they avoided a confrontation with their recent past. Political, economical, cultural relationships to Hitler's Germany were considered a taboo topic. This changed with the journalist Maria-Pia Boëthius' publication in 1991.⁴⁵

In GDR foreign affairs the development of relationships with the Nordic neighbor states of Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Norway were a high priority. Sweden had a special position because of its neutral politics and was especially important for GDR foreign politics. The East German state had traditional relations with the country because of historical similarities and natural economic, trade and transport relations. As the GDR built itself up it promised not only better political and economical positions for the GDR, but also hoped for direct and indirect support of the international acceptance of the GDR.⁴⁶

The GDR did not pursue an aggressive foreign propaganda program for Sweden at the beginning of the 1950s, only pursuing activities in the cultural arena. In 1956, the foreign activities intensified, which led, for example, to the installation of a constant representation of the *Reichsbahn*

(the East German railways) in Stockholm, the stationing of an ADN correspondent there for 'traveling trade delegations', and to the foundation of a friendship society. From 1957, a more active German policy followed, which led to the acceptance of the GDR and a stronger Soviet foreign policy, which was demonstrated by the Berlin Ultimatum. The propaganda effort increased in November 1958. An essential goal was to discredit the Federal Republic as 'fascist' and 'revanchist'. Therefore, the SED could count on the support of Sweden's Communist brother party and other Leftist groups and their press organs. They helped with the distribution of the GDR's exported propaganda material, and their press attacked the alleged fascist militaristic Federal Republic. The Swedish Communist Party even did this through their representatives in the Parliament.⁴⁷

White propaganda: 'Operation Teuton Sword'

In the context of campaign politics since 1957, GDR propaganda focused directly and personally against people accused of being Nazis in the Federal German state system. Therefore, documentaries were at the forefront, with so-called 'exposure films', like *Unternehmen Teutonenschwert* (1958), *Der Fall Heusinger* (1959), *Mord in Lwow* (1960) or *Aktion J* (1961). They all focused on the restorative continuity in West Germany from 'Hitler to Adenauer'. In tone and reasoning, they overshot the goal, but were still efficient because they started a discussion about Nazi history.

The early East German propaganda activities in Sweden took place through the German- and English-produced documentary films, *Unternehmen Teutonenschwert*, which was launched nationally and internationally in 1958.⁴⁸ 'Operation Teuton Sword' was the code word for the murders of King Alexander I from Yugoslavia and the French foreign minister Louis Barthou on 9 September 1934, which was organized through a contract from the German military secret service. The film suggested that Hans Speidel was partly responsible. Since 1957, the former general of the Wehrmacht had been the Commander in Chief of the allied land armed forces in Central Europe at NATO.⁴⁹

In Sweden the movie came into the theaters via the same channels that had been used during the war between the Communist parties. Nevertheless, it

was blocked by Swedish state censors. Facing expected protests of the Federal German Embassy against the presentation of the film and the pending trials against it in Great Britain, Swedish authorities declared it propaganda against NATO General Hans Speidel and the West German military build up of nuclear weapons.⁵⁰ The GDR was unsuccessful with its open propaganda.

Gray propaganda

The GDR had more success with its hidden gray propaganda. In February 1960 the 'Committee for German Unification' sent out prepared material on the actual Brown Book Campaign against Federal Republic minister, Theodor Oberländer.⁵¹ It also sent out a document about the alleged anti-Semitism in the Federal Republic to the Swedish Communist politician and journalist Fritjof Lager. Based on the GDR materials, he published the brochure '*Den bruna pesten*' ('The Brown Pest') in Stockholm. Because of the aforementioned anti-Semitic activities in the Federal Republic, Lager described a reNazification of the Federal Republic and presented the GDR as a guarantee of peace.⁵²

When GDR propaganda material was noticed in the West, it attained the desired success. In 1960 the Scandinavian states directed a campaign for the twentieth anniversary of the German attack on Norway and Denmark, which provided the opportunity to attack 'West German militarism' and its 'plans of aggression'. The GDR Foreign Ministry took charge. Roundtable discussions were planned, among other things, for television and radio with leading SED functionaries who had emigrated to north Europe.⁵³ Under the direction of the Rostock scientist Günter Heidorn, a 'documentation about the aggressive politics of the German militarism in the Baltic Sea area' was created and was published by the committee Baltic Sea Week under the title *Haie in der Ostsee* for the Rostock Baltic Sea Week of 1960. The book showed many archival documents, newspapers articles and pictures of a direct and unbroken continuity from the Hitler state to the Federal Republic, which was seen as a direct threat for the security of northern Europe, an argument that remained for many years as an important element of the propaganda work for the Baltic Sea Week.⁵⁴ As was the case with documentary films, the GDR could use its access to original files, which

were still mostly closed in the West. Obviously the effect was not only limited to the guests of the Baltic Sea Week. The Stockholm Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany saw itself compelled to do something against the East German propaganda. It had already received extra funds in 1959 for this purpose. At the beginning, the embassy organized events, which showed the democratic reliability of the Federal Republic, among other things, and a celebration in honor of Nelly Sachs, a German Jewish writer who emigrated to Sweden in 1940.⁵⁵

Dissatisfied with the successes of its foreign propaganda work, the GDR formed an Advisory Board for International Information in April 1963. The SED apparatus also had control over activities of various GDR institutions, which would then be secure.⁵⁶

Henceforth, in Sweden, more about the GDR and their successes in socialist construction was reported. Above all, it was necessary to revamp the negative image after building the Berlin Wall. It was aggressively promoted to the Swedish media. The cooperation with purely Communist partners was limited or aborted, material was cleverly sent directly to the Swedish TT news bureau and selected newspapers. The focus of interest was on Stockholms-Tidningen, which was considered the main Swedish government body in Berlin and somewhere that they had good contact with the editor-in-chief and political editor until it closed in 1964. They also noticed the *Aftonbladet*, which practiced caution on the German question. They also endeavoured to continue *Dagens Nyheter*. Besides the large daily newspapers, they certainly did not forget the local newspapers, where they suspected greater openness and more interest in trips to the GDR.⁵⁷

At the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty in 1966 in Bucharest, the CPSU presented their comrades with a long-term strategy, which delivered the conceptual basis for the Soviet policy of the 1970s. The official declaration of the meeting called for a climate of relaxation on a world scale, and made concrete proposals for a system of European security.⁵⁸ The main points addressed included NATO, their existence, the American participation in the alliance and the presence of American troops in western Europe. The Soviet plans for domination across Europe involved the withdrawal of US troops from Europe and the

dissolution of both Pact systems, replacing them with a series of bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union. One goal was to disturb the renewal of the Atlantic Alliance in 1969. The second factor that was considered important, according to the secret service expert Bittman was ‘the problem of so-called “second-NATO countries”’. Special operations included Denmark and Norway in order to reinforce the feeling that their votes would not be fully counted, and that the Atlantic Alliance was an outdated and unreal institution. Denmark, a second-ranked member of NATO with the most reservations, appeared predestined to initiate the anticipated chain reaction with the aim of the dissolution of NATO procedure.⁵⁹

Black propaganda and active measures

Under Soviet leadership the intelligence services of the Warsaw Pact worked together on agreed ‘active measures’. A perspective plan for 1966–1970 directed ‘all the resources and efforts against [the] United States, West Germany and its allies as the main enemy’. The aim was, above all, to increase the differences between these countries. The Federal Republic was to be discredited within the framework of NATO. This was done through the stationing of army units in third countries. Concrete steps were also launched against the main enemies, the CIA and BND, to hamper their activity. At least a dozen actions were agreed upon between the MfS and the KGB in April 1967. These actions included increasing tensions between the Federal Republic and the Arab countries, as well as the deterioration of the German positions in Africa and the Far East. Even the discrediting of Federal German politicians on the basis of their Nazi past was to be continued. The aim of this was the spreading of ‘disinformation documents’ in the West about intelligence channels of both secret services.⁶⁰

A concerted action (‘Orkan’/‘Hurricane’) was directed also against the western mindset of Sweden. It was accompanied by the presentation of an alternative, namely pan-European cooperation as the Helsinki Process promised. It was supposed to depict the Soviet Union as peaceful using historical examples from World War II, such as the alleged Soviet-Swedish warranty claiming sovereignty over Hitler’s Germany or averting the German occupation (Operation ‘Polarfuch’ or ‘Arctic Fox’ as documented in the brochure ‘Haie in der Ostsee’/‘Sharks in the Baltic Sea’).⁶¹

The Swedish government had so far avoided a public debate about neutral policy during World War II and even more for the years thereafter. Now they would be forced to do so with 'active measures'. The idea of neutrality was widely present in the Swedish population and the government. The GDR and other countries of the Warsaw Pact hid facts about their secret cooperation during the war with Germany and the Cold War with the United States, as these would force Swedish politicians to form opinions that could disturb the development of such contacts for the foreseeable future.⁶²

The 'active measures' against Scandinavia attempted to influence local decisions indirectly. This meant less use of white propaganda and the maximum utilization of other channels, such as individual issues, sympathetic politicians and parliamentarians from various parties and the possibility of placement of manipulated information in the Scandinavian media. It was important to disguise the sender. Therefore, Communist parties, groups and other organizations and sympathizers could not be seen to be the developers of the propaganda.

The aim of the operation was not the direct and immediate influence of the Swedish government. Rather, it was directed at the induction of a debate in the main national organizations to instigate comments and opinions which would cause a significant restriction in the government's leeway in foreign policy.

This was even true for the more sensitive foreign policy discussions and secret military and intelligence ties in Sweden. Their contents were discovered by the media and published. This would also psychologically strengthen the existing opposition in Sweden on the question of Western rapprochement. Staff from the Swedish Armed Forces were already warned about this kind of 'brainwashing on a grand scale' during the early 1960s.⁶³

The HVA worked on the northern European media with the objective of placing and distributing its own information in order to obtain new information.⁶⁴ This placement needed a relationship of trust—often many journalist contacts had to be established to find the correct channel for distribution.

The GDR had recognized the attractiveness of the Nazi files. They had collected some material on the issue of Nordic-German relations during World War II. This happened especially in connection with various campaigns against West German and Scandinavian politicians who had found refuge in northern Europe between 1933 and 1945, or had been in German custody. This was started at the end of the 1950s with campaigns against Willy Brandt (Angerer case 1958/1959) and against the former Danish CP leader, Aksel Larsen. The campaign against Herbert Wehner climaxed in the mid-1960s.⁶⁵ Materials related to northern Europe surfaced on the *Brown Book* campaigns. Gradually, the repatriated loot acts was used to aid collection of material from the Soviet Union, but this was also supplemented with interrogation logs from Soviet prisoner of war camps, as well as files of the KGB or the Comintern.

Part of the *Brown Book* campaign was a documentary about German radio propaganda in World War II, which was published in 1967 in the Europe Publishing House in Vienna.⁶⁶ The journalist Reimund Schnabel, who had moved in 1957 from Bavarian radio in the GDR to the German channel, served as the editor. He had already, in 1957, published a compilation of documents about the SS.⁶⁷ His documentary also included a number of interesting and meaningful documents about Sweden, carefully mixed with research and psychological warfare.⁶⁸ One name appears most frequently in the selected documents: Kurt Georg Kiesinger, chancellor since 1966 of the Grand Coalition. Kiesinger belonged to the NSDAP since 1933, and in 1940 was a scholarly employee, in 1942 leader of a department and researcher, and from 1943 Deputy Head of the Department of the Broadcasting Division of the Reich Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This book designed solely to bring attention to the supposedly 'brown' past of the Chancellor in order to defame him personally and to unmask the Federal Republic as a fascist state.

The archived microfilmed copies of material seized by the British and American somehow came to East Berlin. Among them were British films from selected categories, some with commentaries. There were documents from the archive of the Foreign Office, including the archive films, which had been prepared for Sweden. Beginning in 1958, the archive indexes of the German Nazi records on 'T-microfilms' were published and were even

available for purchase.⁶⁹ Portions of these films were acquired by the Polish secret service and were made available to the 'brother organs'. At least since 1969, the State Archives Administration of the GDR had a file on the content 'of all films purchased from the US' about central German ministries from the period 1933–1945.⁷⁰

The HVA looked for ways to most effectively use the material on Nordic contacts with Hitler's Germany and the V-man networks of the Gestapo in northern Europe. Apparently, this important suggestion came from Denmark, which also belonged to the priority countries for processing. In Copenhagen, in 1968, a critical book appeared on the cooperation of the Danish authorities with Nazi Germany in the period prior to the occupation.⁷¹ The author of the book was the Danish lawyer and journalist Carl Madsen, who belonged to the leading heads of Danish illegal work in occupied Denmark and who had, as a legal defender of almost all emigrants, a major insight into the conditions at that time.⁷² At the turn of the year 1969/1970, he announced to Kurt Vieweg at the Greifswalder Northern Europe Institute, a work friend from the days of emigration, a new project on the history of the Communist German emigration.⁷³

Former emigrants met the project with great interest. Max Spangenberg, as head of the labor office of the Western Commission of the Politburo, the most influential former Denmark emigrant in the GDR, approached the Minister for State Security, Erich Mielke, for the project in March 1970. Madsen had already submitted some books in which he unsparingly presented the cooperation of the Danish police, judiciary, civil and social Danish politicians with Hitler's Germany. For his new book project, he needed documents about the collaboration of the Danish police and judiciary, particularly in pursuing the anti-fascist German emigrants, and especially the Communists, including documents on the cooperation of Danish politicians, especially the social democrats, with the Hitler regime during the period of occupation. Madsen had already studied the material in the archives of the SED.⁷⁴ Because of the work of the MfS with the German-speaking exiles in Scandinavia, this energetic lawyer was no longer unknown. Madsen's theme was accepted benevolently at the MfS and the file *AV 40/70-Unterstützung des Gen.Rechtsanwalt Carl MADSEN*,

Dänemark (operation 40/70 Support of comrade lawyer Carl Madsen, Denmark) was opened.⁷⁵

On 9 June 1970, the results were delivered after a two-month archive search. MfS minister Mielke approved the issue of photocopies to Madsen. Since the original documents belonged to ‘document filing of the Department IX/11’, nothing was in the way for their public evaluation. The copies would prove the interaction of the Danish police with the Gestapo, but not as desired, which was to prove ‘the collaboration and conspiracy of the traitorous Danish politicians, the social democratic celebrities, and the justice department with the Hitler regime’.

The original documents were processed for Madsen. The falsification did not change the contents. In one case, the MfS employees had erased the stamp ‘reg’ —for registered, widely used by intelligence services—on the copies. In the second case, only the last sheet was made available, which included an extensive list of detained emigrants in Denmark from the fall of 1940. To avoid further inquiries for the entire document the upper part of this page was simply omitted.⁷⁶

Carl Madsen was also connected with the GDR news distributor and publicist Julius Mader, who had, since 1962, been Officer on a Special Mission (OibE). For its publications, Mader regularly received a large part of the material from MfS, including his international bestseller *Who's Who in the CIA* (1968).⁷⁷ With his extensive archive of the history of Western intelligence services and biographies of federal German politicians for Madsen, Mader became an important partner.

Madsen's research, as well as the interest in Scandinavia, allowed growth within the HVA of the idea of getting usable contacts in the Scandinavian media with the explosive file material about the Brown relations of Sweden with Hitler's Germany. The goal was not the anti-Nazi reconnaissance from the beginning. It was about political interference, as well as classic disinformation. It would, in fact, also pave the way to confusion for the actual opponent, for the GDR intelligence service and the BND.

Initially appropriate distributors had to be found who would be interested in the material. The publicist Julius Mader took over the task of making the explosive Scandinavia collection internationally publicized. In 1970, he published *Hitler's Spionagegenerale sagen aus*, a book about the structure and operations of the OKW-secret Foreign Office Defences. Although there is little mentioned of Sweden, there were more documents about the defense work in Sweden shown as a facsimile. Supposedly, it was the intention of the book to prove responsibility for the defense of the Wehrmacht and Hitler's brutal savageness by 'irrefutable evidence'. Previously it had been assumed that 'all agent files and archives of the "defence"' were 'in accordance with the order burned, sunk, untraceably hidden'. For the first time, Mader let former leading experts of the service speak. On top of it he would quote their 'scant preserve', a very scattered secret document stock.⁷⁸

With regard to the origin of his sources, Mader referred only to brief statements of a former Abwehr official in Soviet captivity. However, in the book, the origins of the facsimile showed documents relating to the war Abwehr organization in Sweden from the archives of the Foreign Office. These files fell into the hands of the Western Allies by the end of the war, were filmed in 1948/1949, and sent to chosen institutions. Sweden had also received copies, although they were kept secret in the archives of the Foreign Ministry until 1981.⁷⁹

Three documents were about Sweden. A letter to the German legation in Stockholm in 1944 and a letter from the diplomat Hans Thomsen were included. Therefore, they confronted a well-known representative of the Federal Republic with his actual or alleged Nazi past. However, this would in this case not have necessarily needed documents from the Swedish context. The purpose would have been to relay information about the existence of those files in the archives of the GDR. The caption on the archival file folder was sensationally formulated in lurid terms: 'Escaped document destruction by "counterintelligence [*Abwehr*]": secret documents on the "war organization" in neutral Sweden.'⁸⁰ This publication was supposed to awake interest in Sweden.

In the fall of 1969 the major Swedish newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter* (DN), published a multipart series on the critical relationship between Hitler's Germany and Sweden by the journalist Mert Kubu. Because of the mediation of the Swedish Communist, John Takman, he was allowed into the GDR archives to work on this topic and to interview witnesses.⁸¹ As a relevantly experienced journalist, he was aware of the risk of being manipulated.⁸² But a journalist had to bear that risk, especially since such material was not accessible in Sweden at this time.⁸³

After arriving in the GDR, Kubu and the accompanying DN photographer, Lasse Olsson, were allotted a workspace in the state archives of the GDR in Potsdam in the same room where the research for the *Brown Book* was taking place, a sensational book listing 1,800 (later editions had 2,300 names) Nazis and war criminals published in 1965. There, Kubu 'found' a series of documents on cooperation of the Swedish security police with the Gestapo. Among them was a blacklist that reported 600 Swedes as 'Bolsheviks'. During his stay in the GDR, Kubu interviewed the involuntarily retired politician Karl Mewis. Mewis had spent the war in Swedish exile, where he was one of the leaders of the German Communists. Already in 1960, as SED head in the GDR coastal district of Rostock, he fought for a more critical picture of Sweden than the official GDR policy liked.⁸⁴

The blacklist was sensational, and the Kubu article was on the front page of *Dagens Nyheter*.⁸⁵ A facsimile of a secret Reichssache, which was signed by Reichführer SS Heinrich Himmler, from January 1943 was sensational for Swedish readers. The article stated that German military counter-intelligence 'worked well' together with the Swedish military. The figure clearly shows the pagination of a microfilm. In East Berlin they could also be satisfied that Kubu reported in the same article and on the first page about the observed work in the archives on the *Brown Book*. Kubu let the Swedish readers know that the employees at the *Brown Book* could not be photographed for security reasons. He further revealed that in Potsdam a 'detailed index of more than 6,000–7,000 West German lawyers, judges, and administration officials' existed. He describes all this in detail in his 1971 published book about the Swedish security police during the war.⁸⁶

The Trojan horse

Since the fall of 1971 Kurt Vieweg had worked on German-Swedish relations during World War II. The focus of his inquiry was the 'brown network that the fascist defense, the RSHA and the Gestapo had linked in northern Europe'. Such work could be useful, 'to show what means and methods the German imperialism had worked and today and tomorrow with new forms and methods would work again'.⁸⁷

Vieweg spoke from personal experience. Between 1933 and 1946 he had actively participated in the resistance in Denmark and Sweden. Back in Germany, he had had a tumultuous career ranging from Central Committee Secretary and Agent leader to SED reformer and MfS prisoner. After several years of prison detention, he was deported to the Nordic Institute in Greifswald because of his language skills. From 1969 he worked again for the HVA as IM 'Nordland'. For their NATO department, he willingly made available his knowledge about people in Denmark, who he knew from his exile.⁸⁸ Vieweg's historical research was officially covered through the so-called 'Transport Department', which was responsible, among other things, for secret contacts with the Brother Parties. Unofficially, the project was under the direction of HVA Department XII (NATO states and EG countries), which worked together with HVA Department X. The HVA used the Danish journalist and publisher, Erik Jensen as the official author.⁸⁹ The cumbersome title went back to Vieweg: *The Unknown Trojan Horse: The Conspiracy Against Northern Security—New Facts and Links about Nazi Secret Diplomacy, Espionage and Infiltration before and during the Second World War*.⁹⁰ Vieweg mostly worked in the Potsdam State Archive of the GDR, or he borrowed the archive films for Greifswald, where he worked at the Nordic Institute.

The GDR's foreign intelligence at this time had such good contacts with Scandinavian journalists that leadership of HVA Department X created a policy paper on the inner workings of the BND and the Constitution of Northern Europe. Internally, it was, therefore, called 'the Northern Paper'.⁹¹ This paper was a complex disinformation measure with the aim of influencing the German public. The Northern Paper characterized the main lines of future political issues against the BND. This plan was periodically

updated and further actualized. This operation was to be first ‘launched in a leading newspaper, in a Scandinavian country, as a series of articles’. Kurt Vieweg wrote a book review about the 1971 published memoirs of the retired BND chief Reinhard Gehlen; this helped to discredit the West German intelligence agency.⁹²

In the spring of 1973 the Swedish newspaper *Folket i Bild* published a series of articles about the current Swedish secret military cooperation and intelligence institutions with corresponding institutions in the United States and other NATO countries.⁹³

But suddenly the action was called off. Even Carl Madsen was from one day to the other denied support. His book about the German Communist party exile in Denmark was already published.⁹⁴ Now they said the book was an attack against the Danish state and détente.⁹⁵

It is not entirely clear why this and other projects were cancelled. Erich Honecker’s ascent to party leadership in 1971 may have played a role since he revised attitudes toward the West. Now the motto was ‘the international development of the GDR by scholarly work to promote and stabilize the relationship with the Federal Republic and the major western industrialized states’. It seemed that a liberal ghost had moved in to the research. Many journalists and researchers—also from northern Europe—were able to benefit in the vaults of the GDR work. The relaxation finally brought the international breakthrough for GDR politics. At the end of 1972 Sweden began equal diplomatic relations with the GDR. The other northern European countries followed in short intervals.

But the abrupt end of ‘active measures’ in 1973 may also be seen in a larger context. International détente was at its zenith and the Western leading force, the United States, experienced a crisis with the Watergate scandal. The Soviet Union, therefore, cancelled all ‘active measures’, because the Watergate scandal delivered enough real, ‘white’ material for the propaganda war.

Western counter-intelligence paid little attention to the phenomenon of ‘active measures’ in the form of black propaganda and disinformation in the

1960s. Only with the defection of the Czechoslovak disinformation specialist, Bittman, and the publication of his 1972 memoirs did this traditional form of psychological warfare return to the general debate. In the 1970s Swedish psychological counter-intelligence reinforced these issues and was soon able to present an interesting analysis of psychological warfare.⁹⁶ With the end of the Cold War, this research was almost entirely put on hold. Only with increased military engagement abroad has Swedish interest re-awakened and today focuses on psychological operations within the framework of military operations (psyops).⁹⁷

Notes

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3 Compare John Barron, *KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents*, New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1974, pp. 209–239. Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive*, London: Allen Lane, 2000, pp. 292–321. Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, *KGB: The Inside Story of Its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev*, New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1990, p. 463.

4 Andrew and Gordievsky, *KGB*, p. 463. Barron, *KGB*, p. 219.

5 See Günter Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 1997, Dokument 5 (o. S.). Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik*, München: Propyläen Verlag, 2001, p. 126.

6 Hans-Helmuth Knütter, 'Internationale Antifaschismuskampagnen und ihre Rückwirkungen auf die Bundesrepublik Deutschland', in *Bedeutung*

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7 Siegfried Schwarz, 'Eine DDR-Zeitschrift mit gesamtdeutschem Anspruch', in *Deutschland Archiv*, 5/1998, S. 783–790, hier S. 786, 789.

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10 *So funktionierte die DDR*, Hg. A. Herbst u. a., Bd. 1: *Lexikon der Organisationen und Institutionen*, Reinbek: Rowohlt TB, 1994, S. 83f. Vgl. auch Lemke, 'Kampagnen gegen Bonn', pp. 153–174.

11 Norbert Podewin, *Albert Norden: Der Rabbinersohn im Politbüro*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 2001.

12 Dieter Skiba, *Der Beitrag der Organe des MfS bei der konsequenten Verfolgung von Nazi- und Kriegsverbrechern und Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit* (Diplomarbeit an der Juristischen Hochschule), BStU, ZA, JHS VVS 384/80, K 414.

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14 Protokoll des 9. ZK-Plenums, Juli 1960, Beitrag Norden, SAPMO-BA, DY 30, IV/2/1/123.

15 Lemke, 'Kampagnen gegen Bonn', p. 163.

16 Joachim Walther, *Sicherungsbereich Literatur*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1996, S. 192f.

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19 Aktennotiz, 7.3.1963, ebenda.

20 See Weinke, *Der Kampf um die Akten*, S. 569f., 577.

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24 Olivia Halebian, "New Light on Old Spies" (Book Review), in: *Studies in Intelligence*, Vol. 9/1 1965, S. 77–88, hier S. 85 (auch unter www.foia.cia.gov).

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26 Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, p. 34.

27 Helmut Müller-Enbergs (ed.), *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Teil 2: Anleitungen für die Arbeit mit Agenten, Kundschaftern und Spionen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, S. 225ff.; Selitrenny/Weichert, *Das unheimliche Erbe*, S. 158ff.; Hubertus Knabe, *Die West-Arbeit des MfS*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1999, S. 158ff; ders., *Die unterwanderte Republik*, S. 106–152; ders., *Der diskrete Charme der DDR*, Berlin 2001, passim. See the series in the *Spiegel* 29, 30, 49/1.

28 See the chapter by Robert Gerald Livingston in this volume; Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, chapter 6. Helmut Müller-Enbergs: 'Rosenholz', *Eine Quellenkritik* (BF 28/2007), S. 8, 136 (also

available at www.bstu.bund.de); *Aktenverzeichnis zum Teilbestand Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*. Bearb. Elke Sonntag, Berlin: BStU, 2008, S. 8, 32, 38, 49f., 63f., 74, 76.

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39 Staadt, *Die geheime Westpolitik*, p. 153. Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik*, p. 132.

40 Bohnsack/Brehmer, *Auftrag Irreführung*, S. 35, S. 49.

41 Bohnsack, *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, S. 32.

42 Bohnsack/Brehmer, *Auftrag Irreführung*, S. 199.

43 Vgl. S. 58.

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50 Verbot nach § 6 der Biografieförderungen (Filmkontrolle): ‘Östtysk propagandafilm med udd främst mot NATO-generalen Hans Speidel och den västtyska upprustningen med atomvapen.’ (Kopie einer Abschrift, Granskningsprotokoll nr. 93804). Der Verleumdungsprozess in England entwickelte sich für die DDR tatsächlich zum Desaster. —Vgl. Lemke, ‘Kampagnen gegen Bonn’, p. 161.

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8

Foreign intelligence under the roof of the Ministry for State Security

Bernd Lippmann

The Main Directorate A, *Hauptverwaltung A* (HVA) was a unit within the GDR's Ministry of State Security, *Ministerium für Staatssicherheit* (MfS). It was one of the MfS' largest units¹ but had several characteristics that separated it from the rest of the ministry. One was the maintenance of its own archive, which was located within the HVA buildings. Consequently, the most important foreign intelligence files were separated from the MfS central archive, which was administered by Directorate XII. It also had its own special vocabulary starting with different forms of covert operations. The same scheme continued on the district level. There, the HVA had its own department within all 16 regional districts—Department XV—over which it exercised functional, but not regulatory supervision. Such organizational differences had the consequence that the HVA officers could distinguish themselves from the employees of other departments within the MfS in the daily routine. This fact has certain relevance for the present discourse. It is true that HVA officers conceded the existence of abduction and murder plans, commonly named 'wet affairs', but ruled out the possibility of any involvement of the HVA, relegating them to other sections of the MfS, e.g. Main Directorates I, VI or XXII. In general, this was quite true, but there are contradictory examples. Markus Wolf, the long-standing HVA head, was finally convicted in connection with an abduction case in 1996.

The purpose of this chapter is to show that the foreign intelligence unit at the MfS shared characteristics with both classical espionage activities, as well as with activities unique to an Eastern bloc state security system.²

The HVA was part of Mielke's security company

The ‘reconnaissance’ department, as the HVA called itself, was incorporated into the MfS a few years after it had been established. First, the department was named Main Directorate XV, changing it to Main Directorate A on 1 May 1956. Some commentators believe the ‘A’ stood for ‘Aufklärung’, meaning reconnaissance, but it was probably chosen as an analogy to the First Chief Directorate of the KGB, a position within the MfS’ structure that was already reserved for Main Directorate B. The KGB (Committee for State Security) and its predecessor served as examples for the HVA, also concerning the contents and ends of its work. Markus Wolf was the first and long-time head of the HVA, a former journalist whose life had been substantially shaped in the Soviet Union. However, already the fact that his deputy, Hans Fruck, had been leader of the MfS Directorate Greater Berlin, shows to what degree the HVA and MfS intertwined. While Wolf’s public image has mythical traits, Werner Großmann, his successor, is deemed to be rather bureaucratic and stiff and neither enjoys the same attention as Wolf, nor the same kind of positive reputation.

The KGB was not just a model for the MfS and its HVA. There were, in fact, manifold ties to their Soviet comrades. Initially, Soviet officers, called ‘advisors’, maintained these ties via direct instructions. Sometimes the MfS and the HVA in particular turned into junior partners of the Soviet service. Information was passed on to the Soviet comrades to a great extent.³ SOUD, a computerized data capture system, is representative of the extensive legwork of all Eastern bloc secret services for the Soviet Union. Collaboration in terms of the exchange of information seems to have been a one-way street leading to the Soviet Union. About 80 percent of the overall HVA information flow was put at the Soviet Union’s disposal, whereas the SED leadership obtained a relatively small share.⁴

The overall MfS intelligence input was not just supplied by the HVA.⁵ Several major MfS counter-intelligence units also worked in a westward direction. One example is Department V of Main Directorate XX, which was responsible for former citizens of the GDR and, in particular, activities directed against the GDR.⁶ In addition, the SED Central Committee and—last but not least—the ‘Directorate Reconnaissance’ under the Ministry of Defense, which was concerned with military targets engaged in ‘West work’. Here however, the main focus was not primarily on military policy

but on tactical and technical facts. Military policy issues were the domain of HVA Departments IV and XII within the MfS.⁷

The 'operational area' extended over the NATO states, the People's Republic of China and West Berlin, which was perceived as a separate entity. Interesting in this connection is the emphasis that was put on the various regions. That is, while the Federal Republic of Germany, and in particular West Berlin, and the USA had their own departments within the structure of the organization, neutral Switzerland, for instance, was put into the category named 'rest of the world'. Methodically, the focus was on the operational work 'in and to the operational area' in the shape of OSINT, SIGINT and HUMINT. HUMINT also contained those GDR citizens that had been subjected to MfS 'security measures' when staying in 'non-socialist foreign countries'.

Basic HVA documents were guidelines 2/58 and 2/68 'On the cooperation with unofficial staff members in the operational area' and the corresponding guidelines for implementation,⁸ and furthermore, guideline 2/79 for the work with unofficial staff members, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* (IM), in the operational area, which basically applied to any MfS operation, but was used especially by the HVA. It standardized espionage operations, whereas guideline 1/79 defined work with any unofficial staff members, indicating a tight connection between the MfS and HVA. In essential MfS documents, the HVA appears as one of several units responsible for espionage. This corresponded to the basic 'principle of the dialectic unity of intelligence and counter-intelligence'.

Unofficial staff members: the main tools of the MfS and HVA

In 1989, the HVA had more than 4,000 full-time employees (to compare: in 1959, they had about 500, and in 1964 about 1,000). Additionally, about 800 persons served full-time in the Department XV regional and district offices. Furthermore, there were 670 officers on special missions, *Offiziere im besonderen Einsatz* (OibE), with seven generals at the top.⁹

In spite of this strong staffing at headquarters, unofficial staff members were required and considered the 'strongest ally, the sharpest weapon

against the enemy'. In the HVA, there were 'sources', people who provided information on secret hostile plans, etc., 'IM for special tasks', who mostly acted in connection with 'active measures', and 'leading-IM', 'perspective IM', 'border-IM', 'protection IM', residents, instructors, recruitment officers, messengers, investigators and, finally, holders of cover addresses and cover telephones, safehouses, secret objects and other places to go. Altogether, we can distinguish 21 categories of HVA IM.¹⁰

According to the 'Rosenholz' material, which has now been evaluated, the HVA had a total 1,553 sources in West Germany in late 1988. Nearly all of them have been exposed, but only a few have been prosecuted. Fifty-four percent of IMs were very long-standing agents.¹¹ An analysis of 499 prosecuted agents, i.e. 'federal citizens' who spied for the GDR, shows that 50 percent were handled by the HVA, 42 percent by other MfS units and 8 percent by the military intelligence of the National People's Army. About two-thirds of the agents, considered 'top agents', were handled by the HVA, with one-sixth handled by MfS counter-intelligence and military intelligence each.¹² Obviously, Bonn and West Berlin were territorial focal points of GDR espionage. In the end, the HVA had 345 agents deployed in West Berlin. Most IMs were aged 40–50, only a few IMs were under the age of 30. Female IMs, at 28 percent of the total, were over-represented in West Germany compared to a total share of 15 percent in the MfS as a whole. Markus Wolf said there had been about 50 West German IMs 'worth talking about'.

Recruitment and working methods, as well as IMs' motives, were naturally manifold. According to Helmut Müller-Enbergs, the primary motive in 60 percent of all cases was political-ideological conviction, material interests in 27 percent, and in 7 percent of the cases personal sympathy (for the recruitment or case officer). Four percent of IMs were recruited under false flags and just 1 percent was recruited using pressure.¹³ Kristie Macrakis has found that in the case of scientific-technical espionage, political-ideological and material motivation were about equal.¹⁴ In this author's opinion, the motivation of conviction and material interests can hardly be separated in practice because material interest is a conviction too, and because the MfS also rewarded the politically motivated materially. Nevertheless, the numbers mentioned can be used as a means of orientation.

Eleven percent of the recruitments were based on information about travel habits and from the system of registration; 7 percent were ‘walk-ins’; and just as many were infiltrated into the ‘operational area’. The latter number has to be considered to be relatively high as ‘infiltration’ was connected with many problems. One problem with infiltrating the West was the regional accent of a potential agent. Relocation IM ‘Gerber’, who was supposed to be infiltrated into Great Britain, was evaluated in the following way: the IM possessed the ‘language knowledge certificate’ and felt he was able to ‘deal with an Englishman’—but he could not sufficiently shed his Saxon accent (he was from Dresden).¹⁵

Besides the IMs active in the West, the HVA also had a domestic IM web of about 13,400 persons. The primary objectives of this web were recruitment and securing sources. These IMs, also had their ‘usual’ counter-intelligence IM tasks. The HVA backup web was sometimes used against the opposition and generally to spy on the population. The backup web’s IMs could also operate in the West, just as there were counter-intelligence units whose GDR IMs operated across the GDR’s borders.

IMs as HVA’s weapons in the ‘operational area’

The HVA’s tasks arose from the general ‘class mission’ assigned to the MfS by the SED. Part of this mission was both espionage and measures directed at domestic GDR affairs. Furthermore, the MfS had the order to strengthen the GDR economically and militarily. For the HVA this meant first of all obtaining information and documents. The mission ‘peace’ meant, on the one hand stabilizing and strengthening the GDR and, on the other hand, if there was any opportunity, extending the power of the Communist system offensively, following the credo: ‘The stronger the socialism, the safer the peace!’

‘Active measures’, an important component of the HVA’s work, suggests, given alone the term itself, that the range of HVA operations went far beyond the mere collection and acquisition of data. The aim of these IM operations was to inform the leadership about ‘plans, intentions, means and methods of the enemy’. ‘Enemy bases’ within the GDR should be crushed, requiring the acquisition of information on ‘enemy centers’. ‘Contradictions

in the enemy camp' were supposed to be explored, reinforced and exploited. 'Offensive measures against enemy centers and enemy forces in the operational area' resulted from this. Such 'active measures' were supposed to 'subvert the enemy', as well as support and encourage 'progressive groups and factions'. All varieties of 'subversive measures', mentioned in guideline 1/76 on dealing with operational procedures, were actually used in practice.

We shall just mention three examples: systematic discrediting of public reputation; the systematic organization of professional and social failures; and the creation of mistrust and mutual suspicion.

Guideline 2/79 names the methods by which this was to be achieved, such as the recruitment of employees of 'enemy objects' as IMs, the application of 'operational' technology, the analysis of official and semi-official sources and the infiltration of IMs. However, the latter proved rather difficult. It was carried out with many variations. The infiltration could be done by either providing persons with false identities and documents; using biographic data of West German citizens who had migrated to the GDR; using actual original biographic data, though in the disguise of 'refugees', ransomed political prisoners or former GDR-prisoners who had failed in the West and wanted to return (and were then recruited in the DP camp in order to be sent back to the West); providing them with cover addresses, e.g. China; organizing a wedding, now within the 'operational area', for instance in Copenhagen.^{[16](#)}

The IMs were not evenly distributed in the 'operational area' of Western Germany. The federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia had the highest share of IMs (25 percent), closely followed by West Berlin (23 percent). Thirteen percent were allotted to Bavaria and 1 percent to Saarland.^{[17](#)}

Around 40 percent of the HVA object sources operated in the sectors of science and technology,^{[18](#)} about 19 percent were concerned with political espionage and 13 percent of the sources were involved in military espionage. The main target groups for recruitment were students, journalists and secretaries.^{[19](#)}

The principle of the unity of intelligence and counter-intelligence was embodied by HVA Department IX. It was this department that was responsible for measures of ‘external defense’, which we shall call ‘counter-espionage’ to simplify matters. This involved political and military espionage alike. Almost all HVA agents that had infiltrated Western intelligence were ‘walk-ins’. The same goes for the successes of the so-called ‘offensive counter-intelligence’, conducted by Main Department II. Prominent examples are BND employee, Alfred Spuhler, the heading MAD officer, Joachim Krase, or *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz* (BfV) officer, Klaus Kuron, who was responsible for counter-operations.

As mentioned before, science and technology espionage played an outstanding role in the HVA’s activities, supplying the GDR economy with the information, materials, samples, etc. it desired. The GDR economy’s wish lists to the HVA almost read as special versions of ‘Hammacher Schlemmer’ catalogues.²⁰ The HVA and the Commercial Coordination (Koko) of the Ministry for Foreign Trade provided the desired machinery, materials and documents listed in the requirement specifications that came from the companies or institutions. We shall illustrate this process by taking some examples from the Saxon university town of Freiberg. In 1987, the Institute for Fuels ordered an IBM 6151 computer. The Institute for Nonferrous Metals ordered a multidosimate. The Mining Academy ordered thermocouples, the condenser factory ordered electrolytic capacitors.²¹ The wish lists of industry and science were worked off systematically by the HVA and Koko. In a manner of speaking, science and technology espionage was the field in which GDR espionage was most productive. The SED leaders considered the MfS to be their ‘extended workbench’.²²

In the age of hi-tech, however, this form of espionage proved to be more and more counter-productive. The GDR was far from able to control this technology by living up to Western standards. Paradoxically, any scientific or technical document which was smuggled into the GDR, even if it was publicly accessible, hobbled the GDR’s capacity to make its own developments.²³

A particularly remarkable case in this context was the ‘One Megabit Lie’ (a term used by Werner Großmann).²⁴ At that time, Großmann warned

Minister Mielke. Mielke in turn warned the Secretary of the Central Committee, Günter Mittag, of spreading the lie of having produced the megabit chip in the GDR. Mittag, however, ignored the warning and withheld it from Honecker. The latter praised the one megabit chip as an independent GDR invention. The disgrace, when facing the Soviet Union, the CPSU and its chairman Gorbachev, was only surpassed by the gloating joy on an international level. It is truly remarkable that even today, formerly high-ranking agents of the HVA sector Science and Technology (SWT) keep up the legend of the original development of the chip.

Counter-intelligence and intelligence at the MfS—two arms of one organism

Within the HVA, Department X was responsible for ‘active measures’. It was headed by Colonel Rolf Wagenbreth. In the period of the *Wende* and later, the former employees Dr. Herbert Brehmer and Günter Bohnsack went public.²⁵ Quite a few ‘active measures’ directed at organizations and persons that were dealt with by other departments were initiated in the offices of HVA Department X.²⁶ Operations such as the formation of publications like ‘*Extra-Dienst*’ (1967), the CDU news service ‘*Die Mitte*’ (1973–1983) or brochures like that of Inge Goliath, who had relocated to the GDR, give us a glimpse of the range of attempts to influence political life in the Federal Republic of Germany. The ‘operation Dr Schleyer’ (1977), the ‘Barschel letter’ (1987) or the ‘affair Kohl/ Biedenkopf’ demonstrates the general direction. The support by the ‘generals for peace’, organized by Lieutenant Colonel Manfred Laszak, head of subdepartment II of the HVA Department X (Interior Policy BRD), illustrates the active support of political movements they sympathized with. Major Günter Jägel, another Department II officer, submitted a diploma thesis to the MfS college (law school) that describes the International Association for Human Rights, *Internationale Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte* (IGfM). The IGfM in the 1970s and 1980s was considered one of the main enemy organizations of the MfS (like the Union of the Victims of Stalinism, *Vereinigung der Opfer des Stalinismus*; the Investigative Board of Free Advocates, *Untersuchungsausschuß freiheitlicher Juristen*, in the 1950s or the ‘Working Group 13th of August’, ‘*Arbeitsgemeinschaft 13. August*’, from 1962 to 1989).²⁷ It denounced human rights violations in the GDR,

making use of press conferences, leaflets and magazines, advocated the release of political prisoners and provided advice to those willing to leave the country. As a consequence, it was fought intensively by the MfS. Two examples of the misinforming and undermining operations of the HVA against human rights organizations in West Germany shall illustrate this. The working groups of Colonel Genschow (HVA I) and of Colonel Wagenbreth (HVA X) compiled a draft titled 'Operation "Adder" further discrediting of the "Association for Human Rights" (GfM)', '*Aktion "Natter"- Weitere Diskreditierung der "Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte" (GfM)*', on the *Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte* (since 1981 *Internationale Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte*) in June 1979, making the following statement:

For the further fight against the GfM, a centre of political-ideological diversion, we, in accordance and co-operation with the Committee for State Security, KfS, suggest sending a letter to the UN Secretary-General in which a leading member of the '*Arbeitsgruppe für Menschenrechte- Head office Berlin*' (AfM), N.N., who had fallen out with the GfM head office, resigned from the GfM and joined the AfM, accuses the GfM of illegally using UN symbols in order to give the impression that the work of the GfM was supported by or at least approved of by the UN. N.N. was chosen as author of the letter because GfM Chief Executive Agrusov has started legal proceedings against her, accusing her of repeated slander against the GfM.

The aim of the operation is to internationally discredit the GfM, to make her members unsure, to deepen the existing gap between GfM and AfM and to provide the federal government with further options of acting against the GfM according to the UN Secretary-General's reaction. After reactions have taken place, we also suggest anonymously submitting the letter by the AfM to mass media in the BRD. The letter will be posted in late June 1979 by the *AG Grenze*, [working group border], in Düsseldorf. The friends are informed about these actions.^{[28](#)}

The *Arbeitsgruppe für Menschenrechte (AfM)* was a Berlin-based, seceded section of the IGfM with the same objectives. The so-called 'friends' were no other than KGB comrades.

Another draft includes a model letter with which HVA Department X discredits a member of the Berlin group of the IGfM. A fictitious elderly lady writes to the IGfM:

Honorable gentlemen of the board, I have been following the work of the international human rights organization IGfM attentively for years and regularly transfer a humble share of my pension in support of your work. My age and health condition unfortunately do not allow me to do any more than that. I have always been convinced that the work of your organization helps in alleviating the misery in our divided fatherland and helping the people in the oppressed part. However, I have been shaken recently by the message from East Berlin of the arrest of seven youths. These persons were in touch with a woman called, if I remember correctly, N.N. from the Berlin working group of your organization. The advice of this woman has caused great harm to those affected. How much more mischief shall such advisors cause?

As I am still convinced that your organization is reputable, I urge you to bring order into your ranks and thus restore confidence. The IGfM's reputation is at stake. By the way, this N.N. is said to have come from the East recently. Is it not careless to put that much trust in such persons? Yours faithfully. ²⁹

The organization 'Cries for Help from Over There', '*Hilferufe von drüben*', had a similar political agenda to that of the IGfM. Hence, the MfS also had it in its sights. The organization reports of phone calls threatening terror, and of fictitious obituaries: 'This is the just penalty for the rascals of the Hvd supporting communists from the *zone* by the score, communist pack, taking away our jobs'.³⁰ However, the HVA also impinged upon human rights groups that perceived themselves as being rather Leftist, e.g. Amnesty International (AI). The HVA's Department II proudly declared: 'Through specific exertion of influence in the London Secretariat of AI, it was possible to prevent West German groups from caring for political prisoners in the GDR (line of argumentation that the GDR and the Federal Republic of Germany are one single state, d.A.).'³¹ For operational purposes, even the otherwise propagandistically stated view of

constitutional law saying that either state was a foreign state as long as the other one existed.

In order to substantiate the assertion that the GDR, contrary to the Federal Republic of Germany, was virtually anti-fascism concentrated in a state, HVA Department X, in cooperation with Department II of Main Directorate IX, made numerous attempts to discredit public characters in West Germany by alleging them of having pasts as Nazis. Those former Nazis that held public offices in the GDR, on the other hand, were treated completely differently by the MfS propaganda strategy. The MfS logic went as follows: their Nazis had undergone reeducation, whereas the Nazis in Western Germany were still the same. Hence, the Nazi allegation was turned into a powerful weapon in the arsenal of the MfS, i.e. SED propaganda.

As we have indicated earlier, all MfS departments worked toward the same goal, which was to destroy 'the enemy', reinforce the GDR and, thereby, 'ensure peace'. In the field of espionage, the MfS used the term political-operational cooperation, meaning the cooperation between the respective departments. The term political-operational interaction, *Politisch-operative(s) Zusammenwirken* (POZW), described the cooperation between the MfS and other state authorities and 'public organizations'. All state authorities worked toward the same goal (and first of all, to assist the MfS). This kind of interaction, of course, applies to the HVA as a whole as well.^{[32](#)}

Consequently, there was no clear line between counter-intelligence and espionage for the IMs. Parts of counter-intelligence units worked according to the above-mentioned guideline 2/79 as well. Later instructions like 2/85 of 20 February 1982, which determines that the HVA was supposed to get 'involved in the dealing with the opposition more strongly', underline this. Further, it says that the objectives were 'the timely investigation and documentation of plans, intentions and measures of enemy headquarters aimed at inspiring and organizing politically subversive activities in the GDR through secret services, centers of political-ideological diversion and other enemy centers'. Werner Großmann writes: 'Of course, we worked together with units of the counter-intelligence departments, granted assistance (e.g. in connection with cases of aided escapes). Our GDR-IM

were instructed to provide the counterintelligence departments with information.’³³

The fight against the interior opposition in the GDR was ordered explicitly, for example, in an instruction of Department XV of the MfS district administration in Berlin, issued on 19 October 1987. Dr. Heinz Busch, former HVA colonel, describes the interior task of the HVA with the phrase ‘crushing enemy forces within the GDR’. Klaus Rösler, former head of HVA Department XII explains that the services the HVA provided to the counter-intelligence section increased even further in the latter half of the 1980s.³⁴ Again, we shall illustrate the sharing of IMs by counter-intelligence and espionage by giving a couple of examples. HVA Department IX cooperated with MfS Main Directorates II and III against the *Bundesnachrichtendienst*; HVA Department X cooperated with Main Directorate XX/5 against the former GDR oppositionist Roland Jahn who was living in West Berlin in an operation named ‘*Keil*’ (‘Wedge’), as well as operations directed at the political organization *Alternative Liste Berlin*. The Potsdam branch of HVA Department II worked together with Main Directorates II and XX/5 in operations against the Federal Agency for Pan-German Tasks, *Bundesanstalt für gesamtdeutsche Aufgaben*.³⁵

The close combination of counter-intelligence and espionage is also shown by fluctuation of IM personnel between the two departments. Thirty-three percent of the HVA’s full-time staff came from the counter-intelligence departments. Twenty-five percent moved the other way around, from the HVA to the counter-intelligence departments.³⁶ The leading functionaries of the 1950s and 1960s, Hans Fruck (deputy HVA leader), Robert Korb (head of the analysis department of the HVA’s predecessor service) and Gustav Szinda (head of the HVA predecessor service’s counter-espionage) are representative of many employees who knew both parts of the MfS apparatus from their own experience.³⁷

The unity of counter-intelligence and intelligence also found its expression in the titles of many documents.³⁸ Let us illustrate this by taking a couple of examples from the section ‘Research and education’ of the law school, *Juristische Hochschule* (JHS), in which HVA agents deal with issues connected with repression. Colonel Genschow studied the activities of the

enemy organization IgfM; Michael Telschow wrote his dissertation on the political-operative analysis of the possibilities of using the operative basis within the GDR in order to compile hints and evidence on operatively interesting persons in the operational area; Major Jägel's diploma thesis deals with imperialist human rights activities within the framework of the ideological diversion, in particular directed against the GDR—framing the issue by focusing on the enemy organization 'Internationale Gesellschaft für Menschenrechte'. Besides these qualifying writings, we can find statements of the same kind in leading instructions. HVA Department VII formulated a 'leader information on the fight against the state-hostile human trafficking and the prevention of emigration attempts' in November 1984. Or let us take the title of a document by Markus Wolf from 6 January 1986, 'Report on the HVA's contribution to the guarantee of the interior security of the GDR'.

A couple of former MfS employees are sickened by the elitist pretensions of some officers at times. Uwe Karlstedt, a former interrogator, wrote in a letter to the editor in 2001:

I vigorously refuse to accept the portrayal of the two parts of the MfS, the oh so honorable foreign intelligence service on the one hand and the rest, responsible for 'interior repression', on the other. The MfS was like an overarching octopus that crept into any area of life of the people, however dividing labor, but highly efficiently, working hand in hand.^{[39](#)}

The intellectual Wolf and the coarse Mielke?

Markus Wolf was glorified by supporters and enemies of the GDR in the East and the West. He was judged as possessing a high proficiency in intelligence work. It almost seemed as if he had a halo surrounding him. The HVA was often, to his advantage, regarded to be his work. Especially comparing him to the short minister Mielke, the physically tall Wolf appeared in an even more favorable light. He was called 'the boss of GDR espionage'. His outer appearance seemed to determine the general impression he gave in East and West. For parts of the media, he was an 'intellectual'. To this day, no piece of evidence or hint whatsoever that would prove his high proficiency in intelligence, nor any such proving the

opposite has been found in the files. Peter F.Koch, author of the book *Hostile Brothers (Feindliche Brüder)*, contrarily claims that Wolf had been a failure. First of all, he had been overestimated for four decades, ‘mainly in the West’. Even in the beginning at the HVA predecessor agency he had just occupied a nest that was already made—the old comrades had accomplished the essentials. In contrast to his then deputy Richard Stahlmann, Wolf had never gotten his hands dirty.⁴⁰ Even some of his leading subordinates think that his leadership of the HVA was all smoke and mirrors. Klaus Rösler, former head of HVA Department XII, ascertains that Wolf had twisted about like a worm when facing Mielke.⁴¹

Wolf’s acceptance of some of Mielke’s tenants also emanates from Wolf’s above-mentioned letter to Erich Mielke of 6 January. It describes the HVA’s contributions to the following tasks: ‘The intensification of the cooperation with the counterintelligence departments against human trafficking, PiD/PUT-controlling from the BRD, hostile activities in church circles, etc.’⁴² The letter was one of Wolf’s last actions in his office as head of the HVA. When he died in 2006, the magazine *Der Spiegel* dedicated a full-page obituary to him.

Conclusion

Minister Erich Mielke was discontent with the SED because it was ‘West-controlled’. In the shape of Mikhail Gorbachev, ‘political-ideological diversion’ suddenly came from the Soviet Union, influencing the HVA’s work indirectly. Not only was there a lack of young blood, but also a lack of motivation among the IMs in the ‘operational area’. One IM was even discredited for his sympathy for Gorbachev.⁴³ Some full-time agents lost their professional enthusiasm as well.⁴⁴ Not a few were vexed when IM ‘Carola’⁴⁵ announced from the *Gesamtdeutsches Institut Berlin* that Gorbachev meant the foreseeable end of Communism. This has to be noted in order to put Markus Wolf’s speech on the Alexanderplatz on 4 November 1989, in which he defended the MfS employees—from the perspective of both counter-intelligence and espionage—into context. Wolf was relentlessly booed at. Often, the question of the degree of quality and efficiency the HVA can be credited with or deserves on the international scale is raised. Even if all archives were accessible, this question cannot be

answered impartially and neutrally. The answer depends on the aims this secret police organization and its intelligence service pursued. They were supposed to back up, secure and defend a dictatorship. The MfS and the HVA did not succeed in this respect. In terms of success, the work of the HVA has to be classified as an absolute failure.

Notes

1 For MfS structures, see Roland Wiedmann (ed.), *Die Organisationsstruktur des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit 1989* (ed. BStU), Berlin: BStU, 1995, pp. 364.

2 See also Hubertus Knabe, *Die West-Arbeit des MfS*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1999.

3 Helmut Müller-Enbergs, in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds.), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu...DDR-Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, 2nd edn., Bremen: Temmen, 2003, p. 34. For Müller-Enbergs, also see *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit*, Part 3, Statistiken, Berlin Ch. Links Verlag, 2008.

4 Peter Siebenmorgen, 'Staatssicherheit' der DDR. *Der Westen im Fadenkreuz der Stasi*, Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1993, p. 133.

5 Müller-Enbergs, in Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu*, p. 34.

6 Wiedmann, *Die Organisationsstruktur*, p. 201.

7 Joachim Zöller, in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu...* p. 209. See also, Bodo Wegmann, *Die Militäraufklärung der NVA*, Berlin: Temmen, 2005.

8 Helmut Müller-Enbergs (ed.), *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit, Teil 1: Richtlinien und Durchführungsbestimmungen*, Berlin, Ch Links, 1996.

9 Siebenmorgen, *Staatssicherheit*, p. 115.

- 10 [Unterwanderte Republik- find] Helmut Müller-Enbergs (BStU) at a lecture BStU Berlin section held on 9 February 1998.
- 11 Müller-Enbergs, in Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen*, p. 43.
- 12 Georg Herbstritt, in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu*, pp. 350. Georg Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der Staatssicherheit*, Göttingen: Temmen, 2007.
- 13 Müller-Enbergs, in Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen*, p. 43.
- 14 Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- 15 BStU, MfS, BV Karl-Marx-Stadt, XIV 2513/83, Band I, I, Bl. 84f.
- 16 Friedrich-Wilhelm Schlomann, *Operationsgebiet Bundesrepublik*, München Universitas, 1984, pp. 109–122.
- 17 Müller-Enbergs, in Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen*, p. 44.
- 18 Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*.
- 19 Müller-Enbergs, in Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen*, p. 57.
- 20 Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, passim. See also Chapter 11 in this volume.
- 21 BStU, MfS, ZA, HVA Nr. 686–688.
- 22 Gerhard Ronneberger, *Deckname 'Saale': High-Tech-Schmuggel unter SchalckGolodkowski*, Berlin: Kari Dietz Verlag, 1999.
- 23 Kristie Macrakis, in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu*, pp. 273, 278.

- 24 Werner Großmann, *Bonn im Blick*, Berlin: Bucher, 2001, p. 151. See also Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*
- 25 Günter Bohnsack and Herbert Brehmer, *Auftrag: Irreführung. Wie die Stasi Politik im Westen machte*, Hamburg: Carlson Verlag, 1992.
- 26 Müller-Enbergs, in Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu*, p. 65.
- 27 Jürgen Wüst, *Menschenrechtsarbeit im Zwielficht*, Bonn: Bouvier-Verlag, 1999, p. 161.
- 28 BStU, MfS, AOP 6072/91 Bd. 29.
- 29 Ibid.
- 30 Gerhard Löwenthal and Helmut Kamphausen, *Feindzentrale Hilferufe von drüben*, Lippstadt: Eigenverlag, 1993, p. 49.
- 31 Rita Selitrenny and Thilo Weichert, *Das unheimliche Erbe: Die Spionageabteilung der Stasi*, Leipzig: Forum-Verlag, 1991, p. 6.
- 32 Siebenmorgen, *Staatssicherheit*, pp. 79, 105.
- 33 Großmann, *Bonn im Blick*, p. 130.
- 34 Klaus Rösler and Peter Richter, *Wolfs Westspione—Ein Insider-Report*, Berlin: Elephanten Verlag, 1995, p. 134.
- 35 Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen*, pp. 74, 363.
- 36 Müller-Enbergs, in Herbstritt and Müller-Enbergs, *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu*, p. 44.
- 37 Karl-Wilhelm Fricke, in Beilage zur Zeitschrift Parlament 50 (1997).
- 38 Günter Förster (ed.), *Bibliographie der Diplomarbeiten und Abschlussarbeiten an der Hochschule des MfS* (ed. BStU), Berlin: BStU, 1998. Günter Förster, *Die Dissertationen an der «Juristischen Hochschule»*

des MfS. Eine annotierte Bibliographie (BStU, Dokumente Reihe A), Berlin, 1994.

39 *Der Spiegel*, 19 February 2001, p. 13.

40 Peter-Ferdinand Koch, *Die feindlichen Brüder*, pp. 182,254.

41 Rösler and Richter, *Wolfs West-Spione*, p. 126.

42 BStU, MfS, ZAIG 7373, Bl. 2ff.

43 E.g. IM 'Sylvia' BStU, MfS, BV Karl-Marx-Stadt, AIM 4010/89.

44 Message of Günther Buch, BfgA department leader to the author, 1990.

45 BStU, MfS, AIM 8830/91.

9

East German espionage in Denmark

Thomas Wegener Friis

East Germany's small neighboring country of Denmark was not destined to be a primary target of East Germany's espionage. With only five million inhabitants, Denmark had neither the military might, the industrial capacity, or the political voice to draw a lot of attention from the GDR or the Soviet Union. The HVA's main targets were West Germany, the US, Britain, France and China. On a 1988 list of the 1,500 most important targets of the HVA, only two were on Danish soil.^{[1](#)}

Despite its small size and importance in world politics, Denmark still did play an important role to the spymasters in East Berlin. The East German intelligence services were active within military, political, industrial and counter-espionage in the country. Not only did the HVA run operations against the country, but so did a number of the so-called 'counter-intelligence' units of the MfS. This included the Main Directorate (Hauptabteilung, HA) I (responsible for security within the East German armed forces, and in 1961 heir to the border police intelligence), HA II (counter-intelligence), HA III (SIGINT), HA VI (tourism, interhotels and borders), HA IX (investigations), HA XVIII (securing the economy) and the HA XX (repression of opposition groups). Moreover, the armed forces of the GDR had their own intelligence service with an obvious interest in Denmark.

From the very outset of its founding in 1952 the military intelligence service of the GDR was active against Denmark. The earliest sign of HVA activity was in 1954, when Markus Wolf started searching for suitable spies in the country with the argument: 'because Denmark is a NATO-member'. The early starting point for military intelligence indicated that it took a greater interest in the northern neighbor than the HVA did and that military intelligence played a special role within GDR espionage. From the early 1960s when the GDR was more deeply integrated in the Warsaw Pact

planning in the Baltic area and NATO formed the joint West German-Danish command BALTAP (Baltic Approaches), the military service strengthened its priority in this region. From this time onwards, the BALTAP area along with West Germany counted as the main operational area for the spies of the National People's Army (*Nationale Volksarmee*, NVA).

Denmark never achieved such interest with the HVA or any other departments of the MfS. This would have constituted espionage overkill, since the Danish haul from West German spies was quite large. Nevertheless, some national questions needed answers, and operations in other countries were also supported. For these purposes, the MfS was compelled to keep and renew its spy networks.

East German intelligence from the Danish perspective

The Danish security service (*Politiets Efterretningstjeneste*, PET) only had limited resources to counter the espionage activities of the Warsaw Pact's services. With only 25 policemen and five clerks, it had to keep track of the dealings of the intelligence activities of the Communist countries operating within Denmark. By the 1980s, there were about 100 intelligence officers in Copenhagen at the embassies of the USSR, GDR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, China and North Korea. Beyond this the counter-intelligence section of the PET had to keep track of the East European émigrés, primarily the 20,000 Poles and 1,000 Hungarians living in Denmark, as well as approximately 50,000 travelers from the Eastern bloc countries.

The East German intelligence station in the embassy did not draw the most attention from the Danish counter-intelligence. With its 5–10 intelligence officers from a total staff of 40–50 diplomats, the ratio of agents at the station was relatively small, compared to the Soviet residentura, which accounted for about one-third of their embassy's approximately 110–120 employees.² Furthermore, the East German station was not portrayed as very active. Even though the officers had both political and media contacts, the security service estimated that the GDR residentura used primarily legal and passive methods in their acquisition of information.³ Findings after the

Cold War seem to confirm this analysis. Resident Bernd Petchik of HVA III recruited only one agent, 'Käfer' (XV/598/83). 'Käfer' was a journalist from the conservative-liberal news agency and reported on Polish émigrés, as well as the organization, Journalists for Peace.⁴

The somewhat low score of the Copenhagen station was a general trend of both East German foreign services. The late international recognition of the GDR in 1972/1973 meant that the services lacked extensive experience with legal residencies at embassies. The need for them was also limited, since the services had already built up a large illegal network independent of representations abroad. The GDR had neither the need nor the capacity for intelligence officers, nor the ability to run an effective station. Some years after the establishment of the embassies, the desire to use them more offensively in the intelligence activities grew; especially in the 1980s, as the recruiting successes of the GDR became fewer. Military intelligence repeatedly urged station chiefs to become more daring and use their immunity from prosecution to recruit new spies and acquire enemy documents, instead of writing their reports based on open talks.⁵ The chief of GDR military intelligence even encouraged his residents to pay more attention to local Communists and members of the GDR friendship societies, even though they were 'high risk' groups drawing the eyes of Western security.⁶

The original East German method of using illegals instead of embassies as primary espionage tools made the networks more difficult to detect, especially for a small security service. The Danish service, though, worked on a number of leads aided by their Nordic and NATO partners. This gave the Danes a sense of the general direction of East German espionage, as well as insights into individual cases. Even so, the 20 HVA agents exposed in the 1990s through cooperation with the CIA and its sharing of the Rosenholz material were largely unknown by Danish intelligence.⁷ The most successful agent, 'Lenz' (XV/6991/75), was a member of the Danish Communist Youth movement and his family had close ties to the GDR over the decades—his mother was already an HVA agent, 'Nelly' (XV/2738/79). Still he had no apparent trouble getting a job in the Danish Foreign Ministry and going on to the European Commission in Brussels.⁸

Shortly after World War II, the PET started to suspect that the Soviet occupation zone would develop into a basis for espionage. From around 1950, the PET thought secret networks were being established. The Danes had information about a spy-central under one 'Grünberg', and rumors of a school, which was allegedly preparing agents for espionage and sabotage in the Scandinavian countries.⁹

A name, which continued to re-occur, was Ernst Wollweber. He had been the chief organizer of Comintern, directed sabotage in Scandinavia in the 1930s and was among others known for a spectacular 1938 bombing of ships bound for Franco at the shipyards in Frederikshavn.¹⁰ Wollweber had built up the notorious Wollweber league, an organization of saboteurs efficiently knitted together by a strong network among Scandinavian seamen. After the war, the fear that Wollweber was trying to revive his network would not die out. In 1949 the PET had found out that he was keeping close contact with a suspected Soviet spy, Jevgenij S. in Copenhagen.¹¹ Wollweber's appointment in 1947 as General Director for East German shipping seemed to confirm the suspicions against him. The position included clandestine actions involving smuggling, espionage and sabotage, most likely for the Soviets.¹² The continuation of the 1930s network suddenly looked like even more of a good possibility to Danish counter-intelligence as Wollweber advanced to the Minister of State Security in 1953. Even though the espionage branch of the organization expanded under Wollweber's leadership, the question remains open as to whether he did reactivate his old contact in Scandinavia for the use of the Ministry for State Security (MfS).

It was also questionable whether it really was an East German network that the Danish service had caught a scent of when it arrested the crew of the coastal trading vessel *Runa* in 1959, even though this was the general notion. At this early stage, it was hard for the Danes to distinguish between Soviet and East German officials. The group met with their contacts in the East German Stralsund, but they were Soviet officers.¹³ The *Runa* seamen were Communists and primarily involved in military espionage and courier service. The skipper of the ship had been a part of Wollweber's network in the interwar period.¹⁴

Even though the *Runa* crew had been working for the Soviets, in public their activity was attributed to the GDR. The case was in many ways convenient. First of all, the GDR in the last half of the 1950s had initiated a political campaign toward the north European countries and their populations. In the summer of 1958, the Baltic Weeks started in Rostock. These were annual propaganda shows that attracted Scandinavian participants with cheap holiday, sports and cultural arrangements. The *Runa* case pointed to another side of GDR propaganda. Second, it brought a negative focus to the Danish Communists at a time when the party was in a huge crisis after the invasion of Hungary in 1956, and the following party split. With the public exposure of the seamen, the GDR was tainted and the public were reminded to be aware of Danish Communists.

The case introduced the GDR as a special espionage threat to the Danish public. The image of the GDR as something special in this respect was made clear to the population also in the following years. The GDR did not only earn this reputation because of famous international spy cases, but also because half of the six espionage cases which were made widely known to the broader public were blamed on the GDR. Besides the *Runa* case there was the arrest of Gustav Holm Haase aka IM 'Hampf' (XV/3044/64), an instructor of the HVA III in 1968 and of Jörg Meyer aka IM 'Wolfgang Schmidt' (I/848/67) of the HVA XI in 1978. He had been living in Copenhagen under a false identity, 'Rudolf Samiec'. This gave the GDR a very prominent role, at least in the public eye. At the same time, 20 Soviet, eight Polish and one Czechoslovak 'diplomat' were expelled from Denmark without much fuss. In this way, the GDR came to be an exponent for Warsaw Pact espionage, and initiatives like the aforementioned Baltic Week came to have shadows hanging over them as they were most likely just a pretext for intelligence operations.

Military espionage

The single area where Denmark played a special role—also in comparison with larger powers—was classical military intelligence. GDR military intelligence service did the main part of the work on the ground. It had a large variety of sources to draw on. It had its own spy network in the West and sent out GDR agents. It also controlled the GDR military attaches and

their own stations at the embassies. Beside human intelligence (HUMINT), the military service had, in contrast to the HVA, its own means to engage in signal intelligence (SIGINT). Denmark was so close to the GDR that all of its territory was covered. Due to the short distances between countries in the Western Baltic, the People's Navy (*Volksmarine*) and the sea border forces played a central role in reconnaissance (RECINT). Together with the Polish and the Soviet Baltic navy, it kept close track of the order of battle in the Baltic and of NATO exercises.

The officers at the station in Copenhagen and the agents worked on land to get a picture of the capabilities of the Danish Army, as well as the military geography, by documenting of the coastal areas using maps and photographs.¹⁵ To fulfill the latter task the military service primarily used so-called '*marchaufklärer*', spies sent out from the GDR. Within Denmark, the service had agents near military installations such as the BALTAP headquarters in Karup and the brigade headquarters of the Third Armored Brigade in Haderslev. At the end of the 1980s the military service had eight agents in Denmark, three special trainer agents to be planted in the country and the residentura in Copenhagen with three additional officers.¹⁶

What the military intelligence did not have, seemed to be agents within the Danish armed forces or in central places within the administration. The HVA also does not appear to have had agents in these places in Denmark and did not actively tried to obtain them. Denmark's membership of NATO and the very close cooperation with West Germany gave the East German services a back door to Danish military planning. There was no reason to infiltrate Denmark from top to bottom if important information could be obtained from elsewhere.

An example of a way in which information from West German spies run by the GDR also sheds light on Denmark is the NATO pipe line, which also supplied NATO's forces in Jutland with fuel. In 1962 the Danish agent 'Depot' had the potential to obtain information on this part of the pipeline, since his brother worked on the Danish part of the NATO-project.¹⁷ This did not succeed; instead, the HVA in 1966 got a detailed overview of the pipeline system from their agent Lothar Lutze, 'Charly' (XV 2194/66), in the West German Defense Ministry. He was able to provide Warsaw Pact

forces with information that would give the NATO forces in Central Europe and the Baltic Approaches a devastating blow at the very outset of an armed conflict.¹⁸

Some valuable sources of information in the overall military planning in the Western Baltic were the HVA top spy in NATO headquarters, 'Topas' (XV/333/69), and 'Roedel' (XV/483/68) at the West German Defense Ministry. Both agents ranked as HVA top sources in general, and among the top ten sources on Denmark, according to the SIRA database. Roedel was able to deliver analysis of the Danish defense as well as plans on air defense of high relevance to the NATO-flank, as the first line of NATO's air defense ran across the country.¹⁹ 'Topas' brought the HVA NATO documents of general interest, such as materials on the Wintex/Cimex exercise of 1983, which of course was of general importance to the estimation of the defense of Western Europe. He also delivered documents with specific relevance to Denmark, such as the NATO documents PN (84) 57 and PN (84), which was the Alliances' evaluation of the Danish defense plans. The quality of the information he was able to feed to his masters in East Berlin and Moscow underlined the value of 'Topas'. Of 34 documents in SIRA about Denmark that were awarded the highest grade, ten came from 'Topas'.

With these top agents in place abroad, the need for spies among the top echelons of the military in Denmark was small. What the East German services needed instead was a person who was able to confirm the military picture on the ground. Agents and officers who documented water depths and landscapes, who kept an eye on the state of the Danish armed forces and of their day-to-day movements. This was exactly what their agents, embassy residentura and reconnaissance did. Furthermore, this happened to some extent in coordination with other Warsaw Pact services, especially the Polish military attaché, illegals and the navy who were also active in and around Denmark.²⁰

The activities of the Eastern services not only enabled them to keep the NATO forces in the area under control, it also improved the Warsaw Pact forces' chances for a swift and successful invasion of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein.

Political espionage

The HVA's SIRA database shows that the MfS lacked top agents in Denmark within political espionage also. The top ten of the most productive agents within Database 12, which contained the information registered by HVA Department VI (general and political analysis), ranks six West German agents, two East German officers at the embassy in Copenhagen, one Dane and an agent in the Middle East. The Dane at the top of the list was the aforementioned 'Lenz', who as a young, up-and-coming agent brought information out of the Danish Foreign Ministry.²¹ The information that the HVA analysts valued the most when it came to foreign politics came from top agents within the West German government, like 'Harry' (XV/381/69) and 'Merten' (XV/6427/60), an official in the West German Foreign Ministry.²²

The German agents were able to deliver information on Western evaluation and analysis of the partner country, Denmark, as well as documents from international institutions like the EEC or the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), where Denmark participated along with other nations. This gave an interesting outside perspective on Danish politics. However, it did not give an overall picture of what interested the HVA in Denmark. A diagram of reports and documents given to HVA VI about Denmark in the period 1969– 1988 shows that a large part of the material of the HVA on the northern neighbor related to Danish participation in international forums.²³ When the contents are boiled down to the reports with a specific national relevance, it gives a clearer picture of the preferences of the HVA in Denmark. The reason that reports on military, intelligence, and industrial espionage are comparably few is that the latter two were primarily dealt with by other HVA units or by the military service. When all these factors are taken into account, one particular area is strongly represented, namely the espionage against Leftist parties and NGOs.

The HVA's special interest in left-wing groups is strengthened by the impression from the so-called 'Danish Rosenholz'. Whereas Germany got 381 CD-ROMs from the CIA containing the names of people registered by the HVA, the Danish authorities received the identity of 20 Danish citizens who worked as HVA staff in various functions in the 1970s and 1980s.²⁴

Even though this number is quite low, it still provides some additional clues as to what kind of agents the East Germans operated in Denmark. One group that stands out in the context is the agents who worked with the different left-wing parties. Among the 20 Rosenholz agents, one-quarter were active in left-wing parties. ‘Elan’ (XV/1713/72), ‘Hubig’ (XV/123/78), and ‘Thor’ (XV/2415/70) infiltrated the small ultra-Leftist Maoist and Trotskyite groups, ‘Lerche’ (XV/1714/72) was in the People’s Socialist Party, ‘Lenz’ and his mother ‘Nelly’ came from the Communist Party and reported on the Communists. In the same period, the HVA had

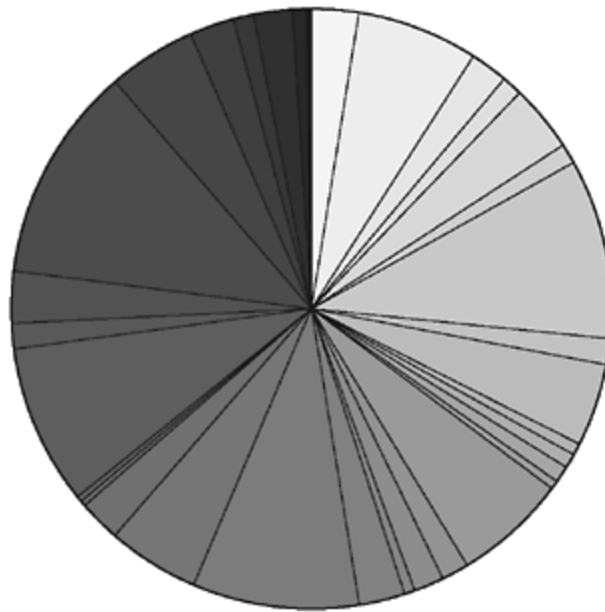


Figure 9.1 SIRA reports where Denmark is mentioned, sorted by topic.

other agents in the same spectrum who were not in the ‘Danish Rosenholz’. ‘Solist’ was a former traditional Communist, became a Maoist and well-known peace activist. In addition, the agent ‘Peter’ most likely had a background in the Communist Youth.

Even though he found no special attention at the time of his exposure, the GDR agent Jörg Meyer also worked within the ultra-Left factions. When he was arrested, his relation to a student assistant in the Foreign Ministry was discussed intensely, but it did not interest the authorities that he had been a part of the extremist political environment in Copenhagen—among others the ‘Left Social

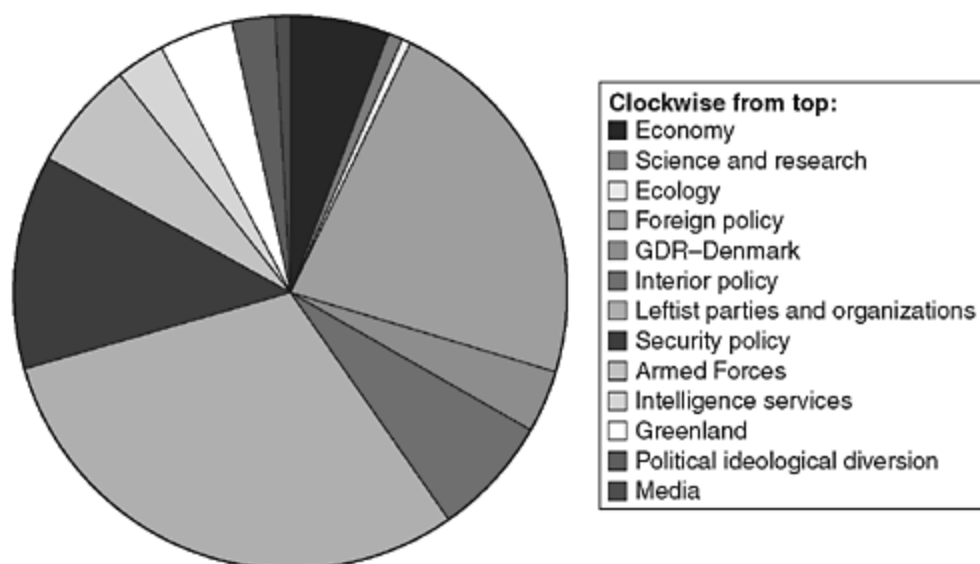


Figure 9.2 SIRA reports on Danish exclusive political topics.

ist’, the ‘Communist Workers Party’ (Maoist—China oriented) and the ‘Communist Workers Group Maoist Leninist’ (Maoist—Albania oriented).^{[25](#)}

The Social Democratic Party had not been proven to be infiltrated, even though the HVA had its eye on one of the party’s young stars, Erik Boel, later the foreign political spokesman of the party.^{[26](#)} The residentura was attentive to social democracy. For instance, officer ‘Herbert’ (XV/1619/75)

reported on several occasions on the stance of the leadership to the social democratic leadership, especially the party's stance to different international questions during the early 1980s. In these years, the party was moving to the Left in security and foreign policy, aligning itself more closely with both East Berlin and Moscow.

The focus on the left-wing parties was closely tied to the strong utopian and ideological component of the foreign policy of the communist countries. So-called 'peaceful co-existence' did not rule out the ambition to alter the political system in the rest of the world. On the contrary, peaceful coexistence meant a continued struggle for political change in the capitalist countries. The vehicle for political change should be the working class and its 'true representatives' in the Western communist parties. Promoting this plan through support of the Western parties consumed a large part of the GDR's foreign policy resources and attention. The HVA's work in this field was, therefore, a direct extension of the work of the SED's central committee, foreign ministry, and other institutions which dealt with international relations, such as the unions or the League for Friendship (*Liga für Völkerfreundschaft*).

The surveillance of the Maoist organizations was a measure taken to weaken the divisions that threatened the 'unity of the working class' and thereby made the 'future revolution' in Denmark and Western Europe fade away into an even further distant future. In 1976 the HVA wrote: 'The communist party of China has given the western European Maoist organizations the aim to support China's foreign policy, to infiltrate their countries' communist parties, to destroy them, and to bring them on Peking's course.'²⁷ In 1977, at a summit of the leading cadres of Communist parties in the Warsaw Pact, Boris Ponomajov, the head of the CPSU's Central Committees Department for Foreign Policy, condemned the diverging ideologies of the Maoists by saying that 'we haven't had a similar dire situation since the days of Troztkism'.²⁸ The HVA underlined how serious the problem was by stating that 'a number of the organizations have active ties to imperialistic intelligence services'.²⁹

Whereas intelligence work on the left-wing parties was supporting an offensive political agenda, another part of the secret service work was the

more defensive fight against ‘enemies’ of the GDR abroad. People and groups who were actively critical against the ‘wonders of real existing socialism’, which the ‘newspeak’ of the MfS called ‘political ideological diversion’. A group which also triggered similar anger from the MfS, which led to surveillance, was the people who helped GDR citizens flee the country.

A political group in which the East German attitude was ambiguous was the peace movement. One part of it drew negative attention, because it did not agree to a one-sided critique of NATO and the US, and even worse it tried to establish contact with independent peace groups in the GDR instead of the Council for Peace (*Friedensrat der DDR*) run by the government. In Denmark, this was the case with the organization ‘Nej til Atomvåben’ (No to Nuclear Arms), which politically belonged to the new Left. The MfS was highly suspicious of this enterprise, judging the methods of the group to be both subversive and there being evidence of intelligence activity.³⁰ On the other hand, the peace movement was also viewed as a progressive movement, which had a mobilizing effect, especially when put to use by the Danish Communist Party.³¹ How the peace movement split opinions can also be seen in how different individuals were judged. The PET, upon information from the Soviet defector, Oleg Gordievsky, internally referred to Jørgen Dragsdahl, a journalist from NtA, the Soviet Union’s number one spy in Denmark.³² The GDR embassy, on the other hand, condemned his writings as a sign of evil propaganda against the peace policy of the GDR. The HVA thought him to be supported by the CIA, but trying to take on an image as a critic toward the US.³³

Industrial espionage

Industrial espionage in the HVA and the MfS was an area of increasing importance, as the gap between world market standards and the COMECON state grew.³⁴ In Denmark, however, this foci of East German espionage did not seem to have played a major role. The HVA did not have that many agents within this field since Denmark only had few large industries. One of them was the rubber spy ‘Hagen’ (XV/8413/81), who delivered information on V-belt productions from the Odense-based company, Roulund. The HVA department XIII (energy, biology and

chemistry) recruited him from 1981, with money as the prime motive for his espionage. Hagen furthermore had a personal link to the GDR, which he had fled earlier in his life. Up to 1988 he delivered 90 pieces of information, primarily on aspects of rubber production. He also served the HVA as a recruiter. The information from Hagen was passed on to various East German state enterprises with the ‘People’s Factory Plastic and Rubber Production Berlin’ and the ‘People’s Factory Combine Chemical Works Buna’ as the main recipients.

In the period between 1977 and 1985 the HVA had 66 requests for ‘acquisitions’ from Denmark, but these were often handled by GDR agents of the HVA, who were doing business in Scandinavia already. For instance, there was the case of agent ‘Walldörfer’ (XV/4073/70)—a West German engineer—who ‘organized’ a hydraulic system from Danfoss in Sønderborg to the GDR firm Ostra Hydraulik in 1977.^{[35](#)}

The Danish counter-intelligence service acknowledged the risk from GDR industrial espionage at a relatively late point. Even though the PET knew that the Soviet Bloc countries were getting more interested in Western technologies, the knowledge about what the GDR really did was low. A turning point, however, was the defection of Lieutenant Werner Stiller from HVA Department XIII. At the time of his arrival in West Germany, the Danes suddenly got a better overall picture of East German industrial espionage, as well as a number of useful leads.^{[36](#)} The Danes became, among others, aware that the guest scientist, Dr. Stefan Frauendorf, at the famous Niels Bohr Institute for theoretical physics had been an envoy of the HVA.^{[37](#)} At that time, he was just beginning cooperation with the MfS and was registered as a contact person. Due to Stiller’s defection, he was prohibited from traveling to the West for a short period of time, and transferred to the MfS HA XVIII—as agent ‘Stefan Bauer’—which also dealt with industrial and technical espionage. The research stay at the Niels Bohr Institute did not seem to give him much information that could be applied directly by industry, but the stay gave the MfS information on scientists from all over northern Europe and the USA. Information like this on ‘who is who’ was the oil that kept the intelligence motor running.^{[38](#)}

The PET also got leads on seven students at, for instance, the Niels Bohr Institute, the technical university of Copenhagen and the University of Aarhus. At the latter institution, the PET furthermore learned that the HVA had recruited a scientist in either chemistry or biology, but was unable to name him. On a general level, the Danes became more aware of technical espionage at the embassy, as well as the Commerce Center of the GDR, which was in Gothenburg in Sweden but also dealt with Denmark.^{[39](#)}

The HVA also focused on other research institutions. At the end of the 1980s a leading physics professor at the Odense University (now University of Southern Denmark) drew the attention of the East German spies, who thought he was working for the SDI program and being protected by the PET. This triggered the curiosity of the HVA XIII, which sent out the agent 'Lissabon' (XV/3145/83) to observe the scientist and register his habits, his likings, friends, family, and financial situation.^{[40](#)}

Several East German departments were active in the area of embargo breaking and the acquisition of electronics. The HVA XIV (electronics, optics, and IT) ran the agent 'Nielsson' (XV/6413/82), who from 1983 to 1989 registered 63 pieces of information to SIRA. He came from the company 'Allimex', which had already for a considerable time been in contact with the HA XVIII, running the Western blockade with different microelectronic goods—from neckties with built-in cameras to special components for helicopters. The company not only helped the East Germans, but also aided other countries that struggled with the Western technology embargo. According to the Danish service, which was already suspicious of Allimex, the company was able to organize special imports from the US and Japan through a chain of companies and 'false paper work'.^{[41](#)} Allimex was also capable of exporting much-needed raw materials for the GDR and for Soviet computer production. An incident from 1986 shows just how vulnerable production based on these kinds of trading patterns was. Strengthened Western control made Allimex reluctant to continue their trade in bromium-enriched silicium with their East German partners, thereby threatening to bring the production of the Carl Zeiss Jena plant to a halt within 11 hours.^{[42](#)}

Another company that dealt with the HA XVIII and presumably with the HVA was Ulf Olsen A/S, East German-Danish joint venture.⁴³ The Company Plon A/S in Northern Zealand was engaged with Koko in the business of supplying the East Germans with 'difficult to import goods'.⁴⁴

Counter-espionage

East German espionage against the two Danish intelligence services, the PET and Danish Military Intelligence (*Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste*, FE), still remains a mystery to at large extent. Two minor double agent cases have become known, both of them run by the HVA II (counter-intelligence), and not the HVA IX (counter-espionage). IM 'Rainer Matthes' (XV/2426/68) had grown up in East Berlin, but was a Danish citizen. During a stay in Denmark he was supposed to make himself interesting to the PET and get recruited, which actually did happen in 1970.⁴⁵ Both the MfS and PET, however, lost interest and let him slip away. The agent 'Flame' (XV/3719/60) was used against the FE, with whom he came into contact in the late 1960s. Through him the MfS learned about the aim, the modus operandi and the identity of Danish intelligence officers. He was also capable of giving concrete tips, like the suspicions of the Danes and possibly the West Germans against a Soviet correspondent in Bonn.⁴⁶

The GDR was not alone with its double agent. Throughout the 1960s the PET, along with the West German *Bundesverfassungsschutz* and the Swedish SÄPO, was playing the HVA. The story ended with the arrest of Holm Haase in 1968. He had been working as an instructor for the HVA since 1963 and was sent out on an impossible mission. The main agent he was supposed to keep in contact with, a former GDR citizen, was in southern Sweden, just over from Copenhagen, and had already been recruited by the West without the HVA suspecting how the game was going. Just before the exposure of Haase, the double agent had been back in East Berlin and was told that he was supposed to take responsibility for other agents and awarded the medal of honor. Through the game, the Western services got inside information on the Scandinavian department, as well as secret war preparations. One of Haase's tasks had been to bury wartime radio equipment at different sites in the Oresund region.⁴⁷

Not all of the information of the MfS on the Danish services had to come from Danish agents. Exchange among the Warsaw Pact countries and spies in West Germany also contributed to the overall picture. In 1986 Hungarian intelligence was able to deliver detailed information on PET agents within a number of organizations.⁴⁸ In SIRA's Database 14, which contained information on foreign intelligence services, the HVA had about 100 reports on Denmark registered. The information primarily came from the residentura at the embassy in Copenhagen and from top sources within the West German foreign intelligence BND, like Alfred Spuhler aka 'Peter' (XV 96/72), who handed BND reports on Denmark and German-Danish intelligence cooperation over to the HVA.

An intriguing aspect of the counter-espionage is the question as to what extent the MfS used its resources to help and secure the Western brother Communist parties. A correspondence between the embassy in Copenhagen and the Central Committee in East Berlin from 1980 indicates how the MfS could be used. The concrete problem was the publication of a book on East German espionage by a journalist of the Communist party newspaper, *Land og Folk* (Country and People). The leadership of the Danish party suspected the author, who for some time also worked for the GDR international broadcasting system, *Radio Berlin International* (RBI), of being a PET agent. Because of this suspicion, they tried to get rid of him.⁴⁹ The ambassador Heinz Oelzner wrote to Berlin, asking the Central Committee to take this problem up with 'the responsible authorities' (the MfS).⁵⁰ Egon Winkelmann, the head of the foreign relations section made a short reply, asking the embassy to keep a low profile concerning the book, and the information on the journalist, as requested by the Danish party, would be submitted.⁵¹

The handling of the book/agent problem showed that it was not unusual that the Danish Communist party, which was very close to the East German SED, drew on knowledge of the East German state and, thereby, also the MfS. The Communists were under surveillance and saw the need to shield themselves. If such cooperation were to make any sense, the MfS should have substantial knowledge to aid and warn their Danish comrades.

A parallel example from the Luxembourg Communist party, which also implied a connection between the brother parties and the MfS, is from 1977. A former agent of the GDR military intelligence within the French army went to the party headquarters and asked to be put in contact with the East Germans, claiming to have information on future deployments of neutron bombs. The Luxembourg party informed the East Germans of the incident. Two members of the party leadership were drawn into the matter, but did not want to do anything as they could not rule out a provocation. Again, the handling of the matter demonstrates that the involvement of Western Communists was known, although a political liability, if the Communist party 'was drawn into possible operative actions in the above described way'.⁵²

The operational base

Large parts of the effort of East German espionage in Denmark were focused on making the networks run. Even a small number of agents needed a large backup. This is obvious in the network of the military intelligence service at the end of the 1980s. For the purpose of running the seven agents and one special agent of Department XVI, the service needed 14 GDR agents that could be used for special assignments, as instructors and couriers, as well as 38 communications points (13 apartments, seven cover addresses, and 18 cover telephones).⁵³

Beside the secret logistics, the agent networks need to be renewed frequently to keep them updated. The importance of constant lookout for new and trustworthy candidates can be seen on the high proportion of agents with such perspective among the 20 'Rosenholz' spies. Four of these were used as recruiters. Furthermore, seven of the agents had access to information on the educated Danish youth, and thereby on the agents of tomorrow. Two agents 'Nixe' (XV/2481/81) and 'Nord' (XV/3976/81) worked at the University of Aarhus, 'Thor' (XV/2315/70) and 'Bende' (XV/5618/84) were at the University of Copenhagen and 'Hubig' (XV/123/78) at Roskilde University. The HVA thereby had its people at three of Denmark's five universities. Also, Agent 'Elch' (XV/1571/85) worked on students in Copenhagen's dormitories, 'Filius' (XV/7731/60)

worked on student and youth organizations and 'Ole' (XV/699/86) worked in general education.⁵⁴

Beyond recruiting agents in Denmark, the GDR services were active in placing GDR citizens in the country. This served different purposes: first, the specially trained agents strengthened the operations in Denmark; second, the agents could be used at a later time elsewhere in the world. Examples of the first were the special agents 'Veran' and 'Roland Schulz' from, respectively, the military service and the HVA VI. They 'defected' in 1981 and 1984, at a time when the East German services were worried about the stagnating number of agents. Whereas 'Roland Schulz' managed to stay and make a living in Jutland, 'Veran' had to abandon his original plan. He was supposed to seek a job at the historical institute of Copenhagen University and work as a recruiter. Instead, he had to go back to the GDR, get additional training and then settle down as military spy in Schleswig-Holstein.⁵⁵

Markus Wolf, long time leader of GDR intelligence, deemed Denmark to be of special operational value because legislation and counter-intelligence was less complicated than in West Germany. He was not alone in this opinion; the PET also recognized the problem, especially in connection with GDR espionage. East Germans with a fake 'West German' identity were a serious problem because approximately 8,000 West Germans lived in Denmark, making the countering a difficult task,⁵⁶ especially since the PET had only very few resources. As an example, one Danish officer in 1980 was responsible for looking out for the believed 16 officers on the embassies of Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and China.⁵⁷

In 1977 the PET launched a control campaign against German citizens in the country.⁵⁸ This was equivalent to the West German Operation 'Registration' (*Anmeldung*) that the authorities initiated to catch terrorists of the RAF and which also lead to catching a number of East German spies. The result was the same in Denmark. One female agent was almost caught but managed to escape just in the nick of time.⁵⁹ The aforementioned Jörg Meyer, who had been operating in Denmark since 1973 and been able to recruit a woman in the foreign office, was not so lucky and was arrested. The PET also localized the Schult couple, who had lived a quiet life in

Denmark from 1974 to 1979.⁶⁰ The agent Mr Schult aka ‘Handke’ (VI/1363/64) and his wife continued their spying in Brazil, where they delivered 100 reports to SIRA.

The investigation into false German identities made the Danish security service more alert about potential East German agents. In 1982 the PET assumed that 50 percent of all travel cadre were agents, and the year before it warned that ‘all GDR citizens living in Denmark were MfS agents either active or resting’.⁶¹ Still in 1985 the KGB considered Denmark to be ‘soft’ on political espionage and, therefore, a good training ground.⁶²

Even though not every GDR citizen was just waiting to assume his or her business as a spy for the HVA or other East German services, the GDR service had indeed been very active in Denmark. To a large extent, it had also been quite successful, since only a few of the agents were caught and the majority of agents exposed after the end of the Cold War were, to a large extent, unknown, not only to the public, but also to the security authorities. Still, almost 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall the overview of the networks, its aims, and its failures and success is not complete. One of the reasons, of course, is that the HVA got the chance to destroy their archives, and central witnesses chose not to speak to researchers. Not only old MfS-operatives contributed to the wall of silence; the Western actors and institutions also tried to hide away ‘the secret war’ within the Cold War. Whereas the Danish security service has taken the first steps toward a wider openness about historical questions and normalizations of its archives, central players like the West German agencies still want to protect their own and the GDR’s secrets. The CIA does not present itself in a flattering way in this game. Whereas the German Rosenholz registration has, generally, been handed over and made public, the American services still keep the names of agents and registered citizens of other countries, like Denmark, classified and exempt from the Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA), due to ‘operational reasons’.

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10

How the MfS' worldview affected the intelligence cycle

A study based on operations against the Netherlands

Beatrice de Graaf

Introduction

Much information about the Ministry for State Security's (MfS) operations in the West (often known as *West Arbeit*) has already been unearthed in the Stasi Archives in Berlin (BStU).¹ Remarkably, commentators have concluded that the GDR's intelligence activities—apart from recruiting numerous agents among their own population and abroad—have not been especially earth-shattering, as Klaus Wagner, a federal judge, stated in his monograph on *Spionageprozesse* in 2000.² Former employees of the MfS, however, are often heard reiterating how much their activities helped to 'secure peace'. Both statements imply political commentary about the outcome of MfS operations.³

This chapter will not present more moral or political commentary, but rather an analysis of East German intelligence activities from the guiding perspective of the functionality of the intelligence cycle. The cycle is a model in which available information is processed according to several fixed steps, ranging from planning/ inventory of the information requirements, through gathering of raw data, processing, decoding, analyzing, integrating, and evaluating them, and in the end producing tangible analyses and estimates that can be transformed into end-products. This end-product will then be disseminated to the political leadership and might be used to adapt or reformulate certain policy strategies. In this last stage, the end-product can also incite new questions or information requirements for the intelligence services, thereby triggering the *intelligence cycle* all over again.⁴

This chapter is based on MfS and Army intelligence files documenting operations against the Netherlands and against Dutch citizens in the GDR in the 1970s and 1980s. These operations were not only initiated and directed by the foreign intelligence branch of the MfS, the *Hauptverwaltung A* (HVA), but also by the military intelligence department, the *Bereich Aufklärung* (BA, Department of Intelligence) of the *Ministerium für National Verteidigung* (NVA, Ministry of National Defense), and the *Hauptabteilung XX* (HA XX), the department that was responsible for monitoring and neutralizing dissent in the GDR. Based on this material, the question is to what extent a specific characteristic of the MfS (and its military junior partner)—namely its ideologically worldview and corresponding image of the enemy—inhibited the intelligence cycle.⁵

However, more important than simply determining that the MfS and its master, the Communist Party (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland* (SED)), suffered from an obsession with their ideological and political adversaries is to ask *to what extent* this Manichean worldview dictated intelligence outcomes, supported already fixed opinions, and influenced the political orientation and situation assessment of the political leadership.⁶ The focus on the functionality of the various stages in the intelligence activity of the MfS can provide a differentiated answer to this question. The stages are evaluated through investigating MfS operations directed against the Netherlands. Such case studies also supersede the (logical) concentration of most of the research that is being done on the MfS' foreign operations by Germans on the inner-German confrontation. Thereby, we might be able to ascertain to what extent ideologically informed enemy images also influenced the MfS' intelligence gathering outside the German intra feud.

Identifying information requirements

According to the MfS statute of 30 July 1969, its task implied 'work against the enemy and the penetration into the political, military, economical and scientific centres of this enemy'.⁷ The concept of 'enemy' or 'class enemy' was first and foremost directed against the enemies of the system at home, second, against the 'imperial states' of West Germany and the United States, and third, to the rest of the Western world. It returned in speeches

and plans and featured abundantly in the various prescriptions and regulations. The MfS clung to this worldview, irrespective of all intelligence results that pointed to the contrary and notwithstanding tendencies that favored international détente.⁸

Even after the GDR signed the Helsinki Final Act in 1975 the MfS kept its ideologically defined stance. However contradictory this might seem, it was quite logical to the MfS: in the wake of the détente the development of activities to forestall and neutralize the possible damage that would be caused by lowering the physical barriers became even more important. The MfS was the last defense against the opening of the borders to tourists, West German relatives, and other Westerners after the GDR signed the Basic Treaty with the Federal Republic of Germany in 1972. The MfS' room for manoeuvre was narrowed by international treaties and diplomatically inspired restraints—it made up for the loss by criminalizing dissent and systematically introducing the concept of 'wearing down/breaking apart' (*Zersetzung*) in dealing with criticisms and oppositional voices.⁹

New initiatives were, therefore, taken to enhance the effectivity of the MfS vis-à-vis foreign inspired dissent and threats. On the other hand, the détente also opened new venues for spying in the West. Regulation Nr. 2/79 combined both ways of thinking and dictated the following operational areas,¹⁰ here listed in special reference to the Netherlands, as extracted from military intelligence reports to East Berlin:

- combating 'political-ideological diversion';
- military reconnaissance, both of the Dutch armed forces and of NATO sites in the Netherlands;¹¹
- economic espionage;
- counter-intelligence, securing of GDR interests (embassy) in the Netherlands.¹²

Regarding the dissemination of intelligence to the party leadership, in 1979 the Minister of State Security, Erich Mielke, determined three guidelines along which the situational reports were to be transmitted to the Politbureau

via the *Zentrale Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe* (ZAIG) in East Berlin. These were called the ‘Informationsbedarfskomplexe’ (information requirement complexes):

1 ‘hostile-negative activities’;

2 ‘conditions that hinder the implementation of party decisions and state directives’; and

3 ‘public reaction, feeling and opinion’.^{[13](#)}

This first stage of the intelligence cycle was thus obviously informed by the ideological worldview and the overall enemy image of the MfS. Moreover, the MfS activities in the 1970s and 1980s were much more strongly dictated by the security paradigm than those of the Communist Party offices itself. The latter tried to make good use of the *détente* by looking for positive opportunities and chances to realize ideological interests and exert influence abroad. Although the HVA and the other foreign intelligence agencies also made good use of the *détente*, the MfS as a whole focused more strongly on the ensuing threats to the GDR system and party leadership.

Intelligence gathering: *OSINT*, *HUMINT*, and *TECHINT*

In the Netherlands and regarding Dutch citizens abroad, the MfS could rely on information obtained from various channels. From open sources (OSINT) the MfS took relevant newspaper clippings, articles, and other publications pertaining to topics that were of interest to the GDR. Selection criteria were first of all defined by the relevance of the information to the defense against possible threats to GDR interests. The MfS, for example, stored a large amount of newspaper clippings about non-governmental organizations and churches with ties to GDR groups and citizens. It was also interested in the various activities of Dutch terrorists and militants in the Netherlands. Second, it expressed a keen interest in political, economical, and military information, as laid down in such an open society as the Netherlands in governmental annual reports, articles on defense expenditure cuts, political changes, peace demonstrations, and the like.

HUMINT was provided by so-called ‘agenturische Aktivitäten’ (agency intelligence, contrary to signals or electronic intelligence (SIGINT)), under the cover of embassies, other diplomatic missions, or tourist activities. GDR citizens that traveled to the Netherlands were monitored or were themselves deployed as agents. After the Netherlands recognized the GDR officially and accepted the exchange of envoys, diplomats were used as well. They could be both residents (so-called ‘Legalisten’)—persons who in their official function, for example, as an employee at the GDR embassy, also worked for the MfS or the BA¹⁴—or unofficial employees for the MfS, which meant that the other GDR personnel were not informed about their real status.

In accordance with the findings of Thomas Wegener Friis about MfS operations in Denmark, the legal MfS *Residentura* in the Netherlands did not very actively try to recruit Dutch citizens as MfS sources. These operations were rather directed as so-called ‘headquarter operations’.¹⁵ Instead, the BA of the NVA made up for that. In the 1980s it had stationed at least three residents at the East German Embassy in The Hague, who established several operational contacts to media representatives, local and regional authorities, and political relevant persons.¹⁶

About SIGINT, much less is known. The Dutch security service, the BVD exposed at least three *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* (IMs, or MfS informers) in the 1970s that used private radio stations to transmit messages to East Berlin.¹⁷ It is still unknown whether the MfS was able to listen in or monitor telephone lines, or even the military radio station in Eibergen. It certainly was informed about its location, but no information has been retrieved about the extent to which the MfS tried to intercept these signals.

SIRA (*Data Base -Teildatenbank 14*¹⁸) shows that in the 1980s the HVA had several sources at its disposal.¹⁹ It is, however, impossible to guess what the nature of these sources were, and whether they concerned an OSINT, TECHINT, or HUMINT source. The emphasis of the MfS activities in the ‘*Operationsgebiet*’ (operational territory, i.e. the hostile area in the West) was, however, on HUMINT operations. An adequate and ingenious recruitment, and handling of agents was, therefore, required.

Recruitment

One of the foci regarding the recruitment of IMs was described in the Central Planning Directives of the HVA for the year 1985: ‘Students of technical disciplines, in law and economics, who had not engaged or exposed themselves in leftist circles’ were to be recruited.²⁰ This was a difficult directive for recruiters in the West to work with, since the bulk of their ‘contact persons’ were exactly located in this left-wing scene. Ideologically, the best starting point was left-wing activists with sympathy for the GDR political system.

In January 1976 HVA chief, Markus Wolf, explained to an audience of MfS employees that socialism had been affecting ‘the enemy camp’ for a while now, thereby opening up new opportunities for the HVA:

We are experiencing that people in the operational area are becoming more susceptible to our arguments—people that we were not able to address before, and groups of individuals that are very interesting to us, like, for example, students and so on.²¹

However, this was not always as straightforward a lead as it seemed. In the MfS view, ‘extreme leftist, pseudorevolutionary or Trotskiist’ groups—exactly the sort of Communist ‘deviations’ that prospered at Western universities—also ranked among the most dangerous and objectionable enemies. Furthermore, the traditional ‘communist brother parties’ in the West were a forbidden zone for the recruiters as well, since the SED—for obvious reasons—had prohibited the MfS to infiltrate, and spy on, party members.

Regarding the Netherlands, the recruitment pool was thus not very large. From the reports drafted by the HVA and the military intelligence service²² it follows that from the late 1970s the recruiters operated along the following leads:

- the Friendship Association Netherlands-GDR: this association provided at least three IMs;

- a ‘right wing Marxist-Leninist’ split of the Dutch communist party, the so-called ‘Horizontal Platform’: one IM, one ‘prospective agent’ (*Perspektivagent*: an informer trained for a long-term perspective and/or a young agent whose carrier choices the MfS could direct);
- activists from the peace movement, the ‘Stoppt der Neutronenbombe’, socialist Christians and other religious peace groups: many ‘contact persons’, possibly two or three real IMs;
- miscellaneous; unaffiliated IMs like ‘Kai’ or ‘Beatriz’.

Among the first three groups the willingness and reliability to work with the MfS was the highest, because of the overlapping ideological and political motives. In the Mielke Directive, Nr. 2/79 ‘For the Work with Unofficial Employees in the Operational Area’ the recruitment of persons with ‘progressive political convictions’ was highly favored over other categories.²³

There was, however, a problem in recruiting this kind of person. Dutchmen who entered the view of the MfS residents had the best possible ideological credentials, but were much less interesting from an intelligence point of view. First of all, many of the members of the Dutch Friendship Association were already retired and rather old. Therefore, it was unlikely that they would be able to collect relevant information for the Army intelligence or the HVA. The small number of active military officials within the Association were, furthermore, so tainted and stigmatized by this activity that it would have been rather impossible for them to inconspicuously work with the MfS.²⁴

Second, members of the ‘Horizontal Platform’ with whom the residents established contacts, and in two instances even an ‘agency activity’—i.e. they ‘ran’ them as informers—did also display the right amount of ideologically driven anti-Americanism and communist preferences to contribute to the ‘peaceful coexistence’ and *détente* in the socialist sense. However, they were unemployed, and, therefore, as *Perspektivagenten* quite without perspective. A resident of the Army intelligence with the codename ‘Hilmar’ repeatedly tried to stimulate the Dutch student, codenamed ‘Abruf’ (‘on call’ or ‘at notice’), to resume his economics major—but to no avail.

In the third place, the MfS was not allowed to set up intelligence contacts with active members of the 'Stop the Neutron bomb' movement, since these people also had a Communist member card. Dutch Communists were, however, often used as contact persons (one step below a formal intelligence status) when they had access to interesting third parties, such as peace organizations or church groups with ties to East German churches.²⁵

Within the peace movement, the HVA appeared to have recruited three sources. However, the attempts in the 1980s to penetrate the headquarters of the IKV (*Interkirchlichen Friedensrates*—the Interchurch Peace Council, the largest, non-Communist and religious peace organization in the Netherlands) were all thwarted. The IKV activists that were approached displayed a loyal attitude toward their leadership and did not deflect from their human rights-oriented position. Therefore, the HVA and the HA XX decided to start a campaign *against* the IKV leadership. The Dutch officials within the IKV and Pax Christi had adjusted their anti-NATO strategy after the uprising of Solidarnosc and the declaration of the state of emergency in Poland in 1980/1981. From that moment, they also actively established contact with independent peace and human rights groups in Eastern Europe, with the aim of establishing a 'block surpassing' peace movement. This course highly annoyed the GDR regime and prompted the MfS to start an operation against the IKV leadership.²⁶

In sum, the majority of sources in the Netherlands were recruited within the left-wing environment. MfS and Army intelligence profited from the Dutch 'red decade' that lasted deep into the 1980s. The German MfS expert Georg Herbristrit contended that in the 1980s the MfS' ability to recruit agents along the ideological track waned. For the Netherlands, this conclusion must be contradicted.²⁷ 'Recently, the activities of volunteers (*Selbstanbieteraktivitäten*) toward the GDR embassy in the Netherlands have intensified on an overall scale,' as the *Residentura* in the Netherlands reported to East Berlin in September 1988. It, however, advised their directors not to respond to these offers.²⁸ In general, the risk of so-called 'walk-ins' was too high. Therefore, the assessments on the reservoir of contacts had a negative ring to it. The contacts were all too 'leftish' ('linkslastig'): 'Attempts to diversify the scope of contacts have so far been without many results.'²⁹

Running and instructing agents

For the IMs, the official case-officers, and all other sorts of MfS personnel in the field, good equipment, for example, radio transmitters or cameras, was paramount to conducting their activities and operations.³⁰ It was, however, problematic to use these in public spaces, when documents could not be smuggled home and had to be recorded or photocopied at an office location. For 'Abruf the conspicuous use of a camera in public caused his intelligence work to end prematurely. After he visited some military sites in Harderwijk and Woensdrecht (where the new intermediate nuclear or cruise missiles were to be deployed) and went to Rotterdam Harbour several times, two employees of the BVD paid him a visit and confronted him with the fact that he had been seen photographing. They had nothing on him so far, but they warned him that they would keep an eye on him. That marked the end of his working relationship with Army intelligence.

The limited number of contact possibilities also caused problems. Telephone conversations were not an option. The 'individual warrior on the invisible front' ('Der Einzelkämpfer an der unsichtbaren Front') had been taught to be fundamentally distrustful and avoid all possible ways to let himself be overheard. 'Contact meetings' with his runner ('Führungstreffs') were, however, crucial. Not only for delivering information, but also to keep the informer psychologically in check, stabilize him if necessary, and motivate him over and over again.³¹

Directive 2/79 of the MfS described the contact meetings as the 'most important method of passing information and material'. They could be set up as 'material deliverances', or also as merely 'sight checks', during which only a visible contact was established. The meetings almost always took place in public. This means that the contention of the Dutch BVD employee, Frits Hoekstra, that Dutch IMs were only 'run' from East Berlin (or in East Berlin) is not quite correct.³² According to Klaus Wagner, 'Meetings most of the time took place in East Berlin or its surroundings, in conspiratorial apartments, or in foreign places, mainly in such where agents used to spend their holidays.'³³ Although this was true in a few German cases, most of the residents of the Dutch Embassy in the 1980s 'ran' their agents on Dutch soil.

Resident ‘Hilmar’ and his agent ‘Abruf, for example, usually met in the department store ‘Jungerhans’ in Rotterdam. There, ‘Abruf’ received his orders, and was also handed a fixed amount of money. He was not very skilled in working undercover, however. Sometimes, he took his girlfriend with him, who obviously had been informed of his East German connections—which startled and irritated his case officer ‘Hilmar’. The Dutch secret service, however, never found out about ‘Abruf’s’ secret meetings with an East German intelligence officer. Although the BVD tried to keep an eye on all of the East German Embassy personnel, ‘Hilmar’ was always able to successfully shake off his ‘tails’. The contact was kept active over four years (until the BVD noticed ‘Abruf’s’ ‘sightseeing’). An open and free country such as the Netherlands plainly offered a hostile intelligence service many opportunities to blossom.³⁴

Only after 1988 the first real complaints of the Army intelligence and the HVA III³⁵ were heard. They repeatedly reported to East Berlin that the Dutch security service had gotten too close to them. The reaction of the residents to these enhanced counter-intelligence activities by the Dutch service was remarkably jittery. This reaction could be explained by the fear that all MfS officials purportedly had: to be caught red handed and imprisoned in the West. The last head of the HVA, Werner Großmann, wrote in his memoirs:

During many operations, it became clear how strongly the enemy image of the Federal Republic of Germany had already been implanted. Many of the pupils recoiled from the risk and refrained at putting their operational activities in danger, fearful that they might be arrested and sentenced to jail in the Federal Republic or West Berlin—a phenomenon which the HVA later had to deal with repeatedly.³⁶

In other words, the MfS officials had so much internalized the classical threat that emerged from the class enemy, that their operational audacity in the West started to suffer from it.

In the Netherlands, the danger for foreign intelligence officials of being locked away for many years was very small. This was the case, not only for the regular MfS or other intelligence officials, but also for their indigenous

agents. The official employees ran the risk of being expelled at the most. This would have been a serious blow however, not only for the services, but also to the GDR regime which was constantly trumpeting its efforts on the path of détente in those years. Personally, for the MfS official at stake, to be expelled was a disaster as well. A position in the West was extremely popular and entailed many privileges. Overall, the fictitious fear for harsh punishments caused the MfS to be too conservative in its recruitment policy. A ‘diversification’ of sources was not even nearly realized.

Assessing and analyzing: content of the reports

The majority of reports from the Netherlands were delivered by two special sources of the HVA, codename ‘Kai’ and ‘Denkmal’ (monument).³⁷ Several other agents of the HVA, the HA II, the HA XX, and the Army intelligence also took part in operations against the Netherlands. The MfS even deployed so-called ‘Officers on a Special Mission’ (*Offiziere im besonderen Einsatz*, OibE³⁸) in the Dutch kingdom, who earned a salary of 1,600 Dutch guilders per month.³⁹ In the 1980s, their reports and operations focused around the following topics:

- military intelligence on NATO deployment decisions and INF negotiations;
- preparations for GDR leader, Erich Honecker’s state visit in 1987;
- activities of ‘hostile negative forces’ in the Dutch peace movement;
- reliability and loyalty of employees of the GDR Embassy and the MfS residentura in the Netherlands;
- intelligence on the microelectronics program of Philips, the Dutch electronics company in Eindhoven;
- intelligence on NATO headquarters AFCENT in Brunssum;⁴⁰
- intelligence images (pictures) of the BVD headquarters in The Hague, telephone and address lists and organizational charts of Dutch ministries

and the military intelligence services (the Armed Forces, Air Force and Naval Forces);

- miscellaneous, such as terrorist attacks or right-wing activities in the Netherlands.^{[41](#)}

Apart from these HVA operations, the military (counter-) intelligence department, the BA also collected intelligence on:

- military operational aspects of NATO deployment and rearmament;
- Rotterdam Harbour;
- reconnaissance and counter-intelligence against the GDR Embassy.

HA II, the MfS department that was responsible for internal and external counter-intelligence)^{[42](#)} and the HA XVIII (responsible for securing GDR economics^{[43](#)}) gathered information on:

- the security position of the GDR embassy;^{[44](#)}
- the way the Dutch service conducted their operations against GDR citizens, for example, salesmen, in the Netherlands.^{[45](#)}

In the archives of the HA XX, the most comprehensive analyses and reports can be retraced. They deal with:

- the Dutch peace movement;
- the movement's contacts to GDR peace groups and churches, on literature and Bible transports^{[46](#)} and letter campaigns;
- the political position taken by the Dutch government regarding the process of détente and disarmament.

In the Netherlands, after some exposures of Stasi entrapment in the media in the year 2004, a few of the alleged IMs contended that they never consciously cooperated with the MfS and that their files must have been

produced by MfS employees who had been conditioned by social and political wishful thinking.⁴⁷ This would have meant that many IMs existed only in the cardboard file holders, and that the political and military analyses of the MfS did not mirror reality, but resulted from careerist ambitions.

To start with the last contention, Joachim Gauck, the first director of the BStU already disqualified such statements. According to him, it is highly unlikely that MfS files could have been distorted or concocted by brainwashed or overzealous MfS officials. The employees did not have that leeway to fumble around with files on their own. Moreover, a large number of 'false' IMs would have seriously endangered the liability of the service in the eyes of the party. This just would not have been professional, and if anything, the MfS was a highly bureaucratized and professional organization: 'The hypothesis that bad people produce bad files is just plainly wrong.'⁴⁸

It is, however, true that many of the official employees of the MfS were indeed brainwashed during their training. (This does not mean of course that the files they concocted cannot be used because they are ideologically tainted—these taints were very real to the MfS officials and had consequences in the real world.) BStU employee Helmut Müller-Enbergs argues that the HVA recruits were intellectually and emotionally so cut off from society, that in the end the cognitive dissonance between their perceived reality and the HVA thinking with which they entered the program was more or less destroyed, in favor of the HVA worldview.⁴⁹

The MfS, especially the HVA, did indeed isolate its officials from society, their families, and friends during their training program. They received a new identity and had to submit their passes. After this 18-month program, the HVA officials had been totally tuned into Soviet ideology. From that moment onwards, these changes were permanent, and existing tensions between actual and future knowledge about the world outside had to be reduced. The HVA training center, therefore, functioned as a 'Skinnerbox': in the end the possibilities of the individual were drastically curtailed and they were conditioned along military lines.

Examples of such hardened HVA staff are set by Werner Großmann, head of the HVA from 1986 until 1990, officers Walter Freiberg, Günter Irmscher, Klaus Rösler, Günther Herschel, Erwin Bach, Kurt Hartenstein, and Werner Strauss. Their adopted worldview was so powerful, that it was ‘until the end’ almost impossible for them, as Rösler explained after 1990, ‘to pick up and process new signals’.⁵⁰ Given the fact that this is exactly what they were meant to do, this is a rather astonishing revelation.

In this context, some remarkable differences in the degree of ideological blindness can be noticed. This becomes clear when we zoom in on the three topics that were frequently covered by the MfS and the Army intelligence: Dutch politics, the peace movement, and the contribution of the Dutch armed forces to NATO.

The overall intelligence on political developments in the Netherlands was mostly kept rather matter-of-fact and precisely formulated. The raw data (the pictures, charts, lists, etc.) had been processed and transformed into very accurate estimates on the level of military planning, military capacities and military defense systems. Fears from West German politicians that the Dutch partners might be all too happy in cutting military expenditures were included in the reports, as were the critical attitudes of left-wing groups in parliament vis-à-vis the Dutch NATO membership. The reports, however, quite correctly commented that the left-wing government in the 1970s, chaired by Prime Minister Joop den Uyl, ‘did not in the least intend to endanger the country’s security by adopting a one-sided abandonment of allied obligations or even leaving NATO’.⁵¹

In the HVA and HA XX reports on ‘hostile negative activities’ by Dutch peace activists, the ideologically informed enemy images become more visible. The MfS did differentiate between the various church groups and their representatives. The HVA sent telegrams to East Berlin in which it pointed out existing differences and conflicts within the IKV leadership or within the churches regarding the support for dissidents and churches in the GDR.⁵² The guiding principle for these estimates, however, remained the perspective of the so-called ‘politische Untergrundtätigkeit’ (PUT, political illegal activities) and PID (political-ideological subversion) and the orientation toward operational counter-intelligence measures. For those

IKV activists that ‘blew up human rights problems in socialist countries’ a ‘border ban’ (*Einreisesperre*) was issued. The responsible MfS departments convened every three months to discuss the ‘IKV problem’. The perception of ideological assaults thus dictated their agenda.

The extent of this ideological coloring can be found in the phenomenon of ‘mirror imaging’ in dealing with the hostile target. The MfS depicted and presented the IKV and some anti-Communist ‘bible smuggling organizations’ that were similarly ‘worked on’ as hierarchical ‘agencies’, that should be eliminated or neutralized ‘top down’. The MfS focused on the perceived ‘leaders’ of those organizations. In reality, the ‘targets’ consisted of grass roots groups, informal and loosely associated friendship circles, or private citizens, that were not directed from above and could not be targeted through the church leadership in the Netherlands. The MfS thus wrongly projected its own organizational makeup on to the Dutch peace and church groups.

Nevertheless, we have to conclude that apart from analyses on PID or PUT attitudes, the tone of the reports on Dutch economics, politics, or military capacities remained rather dispassionate and professional.

Dissemination

What did the MfS report to the political leadership of the GDR? Was the state security able to dispatch objective assessments of the political and social developments in the country and did it live up to the task of supporting the regime in drafting adequate policy solutions? To pose the question is to answer it. It has been made abundantly clear by other MfS researchers that just as the industrial plants, the agrarian collectives, and the public policy institutions tailored their analyses according to the ruling ideology, the MfS was not able to uphold its function as a seismograph to the party.⁵³

BStU historians came to this conclusion through the research project on ‘*Aufarbeitung und Analyse der Berichte des MfS an die SED-Führung*’ (Study and analysis of the MfS reports to the SED leadership). The expectation that is implied in the above hypothesis of the seismograph is

informed by mythical images of the MfS as a ‘wonder weapon in the decision making processes of the political leadership’ or as the ‘embodiment of a perfect Orwellianism’, as BStU historian Jens Gieseke concluded.⁵⁴ Indeed, GDR leader, Walter Ulbricht himself, was responsible for curtailing the MfS in 1957, when he denounced the information system with which the MfS provided the Politburo with daily updates of actual threats, incidents, and other mishaps. The work of the intelligence service ‘was damaging the party’, it legally contributed to the ‘mud-slinging campaign of the enemy’ (*Hetze des Feindes*).⁵⁵ Thus, the party leader himself fundamentally clipped the MfS for doing what it theoretically was meant to do. After that, the MfS never again tried to function as an early warning system.

In the following years, the MfS of course did collect abundant information on public opinions and even on high-ranking SED officials. But the intelligence officials only set out on punctual occasions and only disseminated the reports to a considerably reduced set of receivers.

Information to the party leadership remained until the end ‘a sensitive area, on which unpleasant truth not at all, or only in small doses and in prescribed legitimated frameworks could be transmitted’. As a consequence, the reports were furthermore reduced to the various forms of ideologically hostile activities—a safer area for the MfS than registering ‘ordinary’ economical or administrative failures that might lead to conclusions about inefficient party rule. In this sense, the MfS became highly reduced to its political counter-intelligence functions. Its targets, especially at home, were confined to the area of political ‘hostility’ (*Feindtätigkeit*). Therefore, the MfS lost its role as *Generalberichterstatter*—general reporting agency.⁵⁶

With respect to the Netherlands, the recommendations were mostly oriented toward neutralizing the ‘hostile negative forces’ within the peace movement and the church groups that—according to the MfS—stirred up the PID and PUT in the GDR itself. A popular recommendation was the proposal of a ‘country ban’ for individual Dutch activists, or the suggestion of monitoring their travels through the GDR. Apart from this, more specific calls were issued to organize and set up a network of IMs to control and to

delegitimize them.⁵⁷ The political leadership accepted the recommendations and indeed started a coordinated campaign against the activists of the IKV.

The enemy image of the ‘external inspiration of internal PID and PUT’ served to distract the focus from the many regular parish contacts between Dutch and East German church congregations that also undermined the logic of ideological deterrence proclaimed by the SED regime. At the same time, opportunities for recruiting Leftist Dutch Christians were overlooked by this focus on combating them. The obsession with the alleged masterminds of the ‘block surpassing peace movement’ or the Bible-smuggling organizations furthermore clouded the view of how dangerous the supposed threat really was. In this sense, a specific and differentiated strategy of neutralizing and disabling the so-called Dutch ‘divisive forces’ never fully developed.

Moreover, although the HA XX and the HVA did favor more rigorous measures against the Dutch activists, they were held back by the political leaders. During a joint meeting between the two departments HVA official, Köhler, lamented that he thoroughly detested both the lax enforcement of the ‘country bans’ that had been issued for several Dutch citizens and the ease with which the state secretary for church affairs allowed the East German church leaders and partners of these activists to travel abroad.⁵⁸ One of the reasons for this political interference with security measures had been the visit of GDR leader, Erich Honecker, to the Netherlands—a highly sought-after symbol of international recognition and détente by the Politburo.⁵⁹ The chekist enemy image obviously could be put aside once foreign political and economic interests prevailed. ‘We are at our wits end’, an official of the HA XX already complained in the late 1970s, regarding the many visits of Dutch activists in the GDR that had to be tolerated because of the détente.⁶⁰

In this sense, the SED leadership had become entangled in its need for diplomatic recognition, normalization of its foreign affairs and economic relations on the one hand, and the necessity of defense against ideological penetrations of the class enemies from the West on the other—an entanglement which the MfS deeply regretted.

A last comment should be made about the discrepancy between the perception of the Dutch position vis-à-vis NATO's Double Track Decision by the Department of International Liasons of the Central Committee (*Abteilung Internationale Verbindungen*) and the HVA. Remarkably enough, the first one dictated—inspired by the leader of its Soviet counterpart, Boris Ponomarev—in the 1980s that the Netherlands were 'the weak link in the NATO chain'. It furthermore articulated the hope that the postponement of the ratification of the Double Track Decision would have an impact in other NATO countries and in the long run would cause the Netherlands to retreat from the Western alliance. This misjudgment and exaggeration of both the role of the peace movement in the West and the possible effects of their own attempts to influence it were not shared by the HVA. Within the foreign intelligence department, no one ever believed that the Dutch would leave NATO.⁶¹

In another instance the HVA also showed more insight than its political colleagues did. In a report on the preparations of the Honecker visit in 1987, the HVA described the Dutch incomprehension regarding the fact that 'the GDR did not take up the offers of joint ventures from the West. Dutch companies only received negative reactions in the GDR.' Connected to the appraisal, contained in the same report, that the situation for intensifying economic relations between both countries was very favorable, the impression arises that the HVA tried to encourage the political leadership to be more pragmatic in this respect and pay lesser heed to old-fashioned Marxist principles.⁶²

However, even in this economic case the realistic assessment provided by the HVA was left ignored and ideological patterns abided—wishful thinking about the revolutionary spirit of the Dutch working class and the mobilizing force of Communist peace proposals in the first case and fossilized economic ideas in the second.

Adjustment of information and operational requirements

With the symptoms of crisis increasing, MfS officials grew keener to register 'hostile negative activities' and 'trends in the population'. Topics like 'fleeing attempts' or the massive emigration movement remained,

however, taboo; the MfS still avoided providing the party with details on motives and background of the many would-be emigrants and fugitives. Instead, Mielke tried to encourage the party leadership to adopt a staunch attitude against the East Germans that submitted emigration requests and even prosecuted them, but Honecker did not respond to that. In the last months before the Berlin Wall came down, Honecker was paralyzed through illness and the situation. The intensive monitoring of the events in the GDR by the Western media further narrowed down the room for manoeuvre.⁶³

The SED regime did not want to know what was really causing the crisis, and remained focused on the alleged external incitement of internal dissent. The MfS reports that did very cautiously tangle the roots of the crisis were marginalized by the fact that the MfS was not used as the main intelligence supplier to the party anymore. Internal party communication, for example, through the divisions of the Central Committee had grown in importance over time. The MfS, therefore, cannot be viewed as a substitute for a failing public opinion in the GDR. It had

a special function in the interplay of various information channels, was confined by the legitimizing axioms of a monopolistic party rule and concentrated thematically on espionage (especially against West Germany), hostile activities (in the broadest sense), informed on deficiencies, reported on accidents etc., and—considerably limited—to trends within the population.⁶⁴

Concluding remarks

Regarding the individual stages of the intelligence cycle, it can be concluded that its functionality was not entirely impeded by the existing ideological enemy images. Some advantages of the East German worldview became visible by studying the art of intelligence gathering and recruitment of informers in the Netherlands. The East German intelligence officials made good use of the ‘red decade’ and the anti-anti-Communist attitude among the peace activists and progressive church members here. Through ideological positions East German MfS officials and their colleagues from Army intelligence succeeded in persuading quite a number of Dutch

citizens to work for them as IMs, or used them as contact persons (intentionally or unintentionally).

However, mainly unemployed or failed students were interested in working with the East German intelligence departments. Their use for a broad-based network of influence on Dutch political life, especially on the ruling social democrat or Christian democrat parties was, therefore, not significant. Economic espionage was not possible either because of their poor social status. Notwithstanding this situation, the Army intelligence department did book some considerable results. The Dutch informer 'Abruf had no problems in covering a wide array of militarily relevant objects, since it was not prohibited in the Netherlands to photograph publicly accessible sites, barracks, airports, or harbours. The raw data were then subsequently assessed and processed into very professional, detailed, and dispassionate reports. Even when ideological preferences sometimes shone through, the Army intelligence and the HVA were very much able to discern between the different attitudes of their opponents.

However, the range of the topics on which the intelligence officials reported suffered heavily from the confined information requirements imposed on them by the party. The SED ordered the intelligence departments (especially the inwards-oriented ones) to collect their material mainly from the perspective of controlling and combating the 'enemy'. This decision fundamentally tainted the value of the collected intelligence.

In the end, the political leadership was mainly interested in neutralizing Dutch citizens and organizations with 'active contacts to PUT and PID' in the GDR. Regarding the dissemination of intelligence to these leaders, a precarious problem became visible. It regarded the measure of publicity on which the intelligence officers reported (for instance, the number of participants in a demonstration, the public status of a place, the presence of media representatives). This determined whether the SED decided to act upon the information—or let it pass. Concerning some of the intelligence reports on activities of Dutch peace and church groups in the GDR, heavy criticism of the MfS cannot be overheard. It blamed the political leadership for the accidents that happened when security measures were not applied forcibly enough. It also lamented the fact that they were constantly

overridden when foreign political considerations were at stake. These grievances were, furthermore, enhanced by the knowledge that they, the MfS, had to clean up the mess afterwards.^{[65](#)}

The party leadership was mainly concerned with upholding the illusion of the GDR being a stable and intact society. With this aim, it became entangled in different and contradicting strategies. During the preparation of Honecker's state visit to the Netherlands, many East German citizens were allowed to visit the Netherlands—a visit which they had applied for years ago. Country bans were lifted and partnerships between churches, cities, and even marriages were authorized. On the other hand, the party and the MfS leadership urged all informers to intensively monitor possible PUT and PID activities in the GDR and in the Netherlands that might damage the state visit. Informers, officials, and contact persons were instructed to report information about hostile publicity actions in advance. The MfS resident in The Hague was asked to neutralize all 'disruptive elements'.^{[66](#)}

These two strategies did, of course, clash. A conflict that, because of the level of publicity involved in the Netherlands, could not be solved. Honecker had to tolerate an impressive demonstration of Dutch World War II veterans and human rights activists against the treatment of dissidents in the GDR in front of the resistance museum in Amsterdam, where he was scheduled to meet some of the comrades he had known while in exile in the Netherlands in the early 1930s. The official anti-fascist doctrine thus became tainted instead of invigorated by the museum's visit. The head of state also had to accept a petition with names of East German political prisoners, something the HVA had warned him of in May 1987 but had not been able to prevent.^{[67](#)}

This can be defined as a real intelligence failure—not inspired by a lack of information or information sharing, but by a lack of insight into the ways a civil society works. The informers and officials just did not possess the instruments to impede public protests in an open society. This failure was, furthermore, aggravated by the above-mentioned taboo on studying the roots of the public legitimacy crisis in the GDR itself. One could even wonder whether this taboo, combined with the 'mirror imaging' and projecting of GDR hierarchies on to the rest of the world, did not represent

the most important explanations for the failure of the MfS in predicting the implosion of the party rule.

On the other hand, as already laid out, the very realistic and precise HVA reports on the economical situation or the politico-military alliance of the Netherlands were ignored by the Politburo and put aside because of ideological prerogatives.

Intelligence researcher, Eva Horn, explained in 2007 that a problem is due to arise ‘when the martial logics of intelligence are subjugated to the state and become an instrument of government’. The combination of ‘intelligence as a tool of government and an instrument of waging war’ against internal and external enemies can of course also be identified in the character of the MfS as ‘shield and sword of the party’. The integration of wartime dynamics, like a metaphorical call to arms, the declaration of war against ideological enemies, and the continuous mobilizing of forces in state politics provoked a ‘singular effect of self hypnotizing’, according to Horn. Academic research and political debates invite opposing opinions and constructive criticism. In the GDR, however, enemy intelligence remained ‘behind the mirror’ and could not be adjusted to reality anymore.^{[68](#)}

The regime remained blind to the dynamics of the real enmity that threatened the GDR—that of the GDR citizens against the party leadership. They only started to grasp the extent of this enmity during the German autumn of 1989. Before that, the obsession with the external enemy and the ideologically conditioned taboos—and the ensuing restriction of intelligence reports—prevented the Politburo from gaining real insights into the deficiencies of their party rule. The MfS reports to the party leadership did not provide knowledge that could be disseminated or communicated widely. They, therefore, could not supplant democratic oversight or public opinion. The MfS could not assume the role of the *Allensbacher Institut*, a famous West German polling institute, as the German historian Ralph Jessen pointed out. The MfS only supplied its masters with specific functional background information, and focused on ideological threats.^{[69](#)} The value of the seized economical and military data could, however, not make up for the political loss of reality.

Notes

1 Cf. Hubertus Knabe, *West-Arbeit des MfS. Das Zusammenspiel von 'Aufklärung' und 'Abwehr'*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 1999. Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds), *Gesicht dem Westen zu...DDR Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Göttingen: Edition Temmen, 2003. Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Teil 2: Anleitungen für Arbeiten mit Agenten, Kundschaftern und Spionen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 1998. Hubertus Knabe, *Die unterwanderte Republik. Stasi im Westen*, Berlin: Propyläen, 1999. Helmut Müller-Enbergs, 'Die Erforschung der West-Arbeit des MfS', in Siegfried Suckut and Jürgen Weber (eds), *Stasi-Akten zwischen Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Eine Zwischenbilanz*, Munich: Links, 2003, pp. 240–269.

2 Klaus Wagner, *Spionageprozesse. Spionagemethoden des MfS (HVA) und östlicher (u.a. KGB) sowie nahöstlicher Nachrichtendienste in den Jahren 1977–1990. In der Bearbeitung von Guido Korte*, Brühl: Fachhochschule des Bundes, 2000, pp. 54–55.

3 Cf. Gabriele Gast, *Kundschafterin des Friedens. 17 Jahre Topspionin der DDR beim BND*, Frankfurt am Main: Eichborn Verlag, 1999.

4 Cees Wiebes, 'Hookers and sportscars? De theorie van het inlichtingenwerk', in Paul Koedijk and Jan Linssen, *Verspieters voor het vaderland*, The Hague, 1996, pp. 11–35, here: 16–18. Cf. also Robert M.Clark, *Intelligence Analysis: A Target-Centric Approach*, Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2003.

5 For an overview on these operations see my dissertation: Beatrice de Graaf, *Über die Mauer: Die DDK, die niederländischen Kirchen und die Friedensbewegung*. Münster: Agenda Verlag, 2007.

6 Ralph Jessen, 'Staatssicherheit, SED und Öffentlichkeit. Überlegungen zum Berichtswesen des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit', in Jens Gieseke (ed.), *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft. Studien zum Herrschaftsalltag in der DDR*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007, pp. 157–163.

7 ‘Statut des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit’, 30 July 1969. BStU, MfS, SdM 2619.

8 Knabe, *West-Arbeit*, pp. 89–100.

9 Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern*, p. 186. Cf. also Ehrhart Neubert, ‘Oppositionelle im Visier des MfS. Opposition und MfS im Phantasma des Kommunismus’, in Suckut and Weber (eds), *Stasi-Akten*, pp. 167–197.

10 ‘RL—Nr.: 2/79 Arbeit mit Inoffiziellen Mitarbeitern im Operationsgebiet’. As cited in Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit, 3 Bde., Bd.2, Anleitungen für die Arbeit mit Agenten, Kundschaftern und Spionen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 1998, p. 471 and further.

11 Cf. Dick Engelen, *Frontdienst. De BVD in de Koude Oorlog*, Den Haag: SDU, 2008, pp. 140–141.

12 Telegrams and reports to MfS headquarters from The Hague: 21 March 1984, 18 January 1989, 31 March 1989, security report, Fortschreibung der Sicherheitsanalyse zur Rod im Ausbildungsjahr 1987/1988 of 18 November 1988. BStU, MfS HA I 1682, pp. 1–11.

13 Jens Gieseke, ‘Annäherungen und Fragen an die “Meldungen aus der Republik”’, in Gieseke (ed.), *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft*, pp. 79–98.

14 Cf. for example ‘Hilmar’, ‘Zum Einsatz in den NL’, 1985. ‘Sicherheitsanalyse zum Vorgang AM-V “Abruf” 31 January 1986. BStU MfS HA I 1682, pp. 58–63, 81–84.

15 Thomas Wegener Friis, ‘Die nachrichtendienstliche Tätigkeit der DDR in Dänemark’, in Jan Hecker-Stampehl (eds), *Nordeuropa und die beiden deutschen Staaten 1949– 1989*, Leipzig and Berlin: Edition Kirchhof & Franke, 2007, p. 55.

16 RoD Den Haag, ‘Fortschreibung der Sicherheitsanalyse zur RoD im Ausbildungsjahr 1987/1988’, 11 November 1988. BStU HA I, 1682, pp. 7–10.

17 Frits Hoekstra, *In dienst van de BVD. Spionage en contraspionage in Nederland*, Amsterdam: Boom, 2004, pp. 104–105. Engelen, *Frontdienst*, p. 138.

18 ‘System der Informations-Recherche der HVA’. This acronym comprised a database system in which the HVA registered all informers and operations (Vorgänge), as well as the information provided by the informers. Cf. Georg Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage. Eine analytische Studie*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007, pp. 54–64.

19 Cf. Query in the SIRA database 14, *Druckauftrag* Nr. 12839, AR 7/SG03, Nr. AU 2585/05 Z.

20 HA XVIII, ‘Pläne und Massnahmen feindlicher Geheimdienste gegen Auslandsvertretungen und langfristige Delegierungskader der DDR im nichtsozialistischen Ausland im Jahre 1985’. BStU MfS HA XVIII, pp. 32–33.

21 As quoted in Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger*, pp. 376–377.

22 The HA I/Abt. Äussere Abwehr/Unterabt. 2 was responsible for securing the BA/ NVA. At the same time, many NVA intelligence officers were also MfS IMs. That meant that ‘Abruf was an NVA agent, although his case officers or his superior were probably proper MfS IMs and passed the information on to the *Verwaltung* 2000. In short, although the NVA residentura in The Hague was another institution and another ministry, it functioned as a junior partner to the MfS.

23 Cf. Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit*, volume 2, p. 16.

24 ‘Vorgangsanalyse zum Vorgang Aorta’, 15 July 1986. Aufgabenstellung AA 1986. Fortschreibung der Sicherheitsanalyse, ‘Haupt’ 1 March 1986. Several reports on IM ‘Abruf by ‘Haupt’ and other MfS personnel. BStU MfS HA I 1682: pp. 29–163.

25 HVA III, ‘Tätigkeit IKV gegen DDR’, 15 February 1988. BStU MfS ZMA 1993, Band 2, p. 57.

26 Report of Hauptabteilung XX (HA XX) for the Stellvertreter des Ministers, Genossen Generalleutnant Mittag, 'Negative Aktivitäten von Personen des "Interkirchlichen Friedensrates" (IKV) der Niederlande', 9 August 1982, BStU MfS HA XX ZMA 1993/5. Report of the HA XX/4, 'Interkirchlicher Friedensrat der Niederlande', October/November 1982, BStU MfS HA XX/4 1917. In the mid-1980s, IKV was mentioned in a list of approximately 1,000 'Zielobjekte' (targets) of the Stasi's Reconnaissance Service, the *Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*. 'Zielobjekte der HVA—alphabetische Liste', BStU ASt Gera BV Gera/Abt. XV 0187, pp. 21–39, in Knabe, *West-Arbeit*, pp. 518–554. See 537.

27 Georg Herbstritt, 'Erkenntnisse über die Westarbeit des MfS aus den Spionageverfahren der neunziger Jahre', in Bäumer-Schleinkofer (ed.), *Die Westlinke und die DDR*, Frankfurt am Main, 2005, p. 133.

28 HAI 1682, p. 11.

29 RoD Den Haag, 'Fortschreibung der Sicherheitsanalyse zur RoD im Ausbildungsjahr 1987/1988', 11 November 1988. BStU HA I, 1682, pp. 7–10.

30 Wagner, *Spionageprozesse*, p. 46. Kristie Macrakis. *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge, 2008, chapter 8 on secret communication.

31 Wagner, *Spionageprozesse*, p. 48. Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets*, chapter 8.

32 Hoekstra, *In dienst van de BVD*, p. 85.

33 Wagner, *Spionageprozesse*, p. 55; Cf. also Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, volume 2, p. 485 and further.

34 'Hilmar', 'Zum Einsatz in den NL', 1985. 'Sicherheitsanalyse zum Vorgang AM-V "Abruf" 31 January 1986. BStU MfS HA I 1682: pp. 58–63, 81–84.

35 From the archives, it could be deduced that HVA III/1 was also responsible for activities against the Netherlands, apart from its focus on France, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Italy. This subdivision had at least 34 IM/KP at its disposal in these countries. Cf. Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Teil 3: Statistik* (Berlin: Chr. Links, 2008), p. 152.

36 Werner Großmann, *Bonn im Blick. Die DDR-Aufklärung aus der Sicht ihres letzten Chefs*, Berlin, 2000, p. 70.

37 Cf. Uwe Peter Heidingsfeld, *Kirchlich relevante Aspekte der Westarbeit des MfS*, 24 January 2003, 03/296, p. 85.

38 These sources were not recruited as ‘spies’, but were engaged as official MfS employees (i.e. with a salary, instead of bribes, bonuses or other kinds of informal reimbursements) and held a military rank within the MfS apparatus like all other officials.

39 The OibE ‘Frequenz’ (XV 2274/74) operated as a developer of NATO-programs at Shape Technical Center in The Hague. Cf. Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, volume 3, p. 213.

40 The HVA XII/2 was responsible for the operational headquarters of NATO’s Allied Command Operations (ACO), which was located in Brunssum. The subdivision had four non-German and 12 West German IM/KP’s at its disposal. Cf. Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, volume 2, p. 231; *Ibid.*, volume 3, p. 174, 1976.

41 Cf. Rechercheausdruck aus dem SIRA Teildatenbank 14, Druckauftrag Nr. 12839, AR 7/SG03, Nr. AU 2585/05 Z.

42 The HA 11/10/2 was responsible for securing the GDR embassies and foreign missions against hostile intelligence operations. For this task, the subdivision could rely on six IMs that could also be deployed in the Netherlands. Cf. Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, volume 2, p. 265.

43 Maria Haendcke-Hoppe-Arndt, *Die Hauptabteilung XVIII: Volkswirtschaft (MfS-Handbuch. Anatomie der Staatssicherheit—*

Geschichte, Struktur, Methoden, Teil 111/10), Berlin, 1997.

44 Apart from the HA II, the subdivision HVA III/B/1 was also responsible for securing the GDR embassies in the West, including the one in The Hague/Netherlands. Cf. Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, volume 3, p. 167.

45 HA XVIII, 'Pläne und Massnahmen feindlicher Geheimdienste gegen Auslandsvertretungen und langfristige Delegierungskader der DDR im nichtsozialistischen Ausland im Jahre 1985'. BStU MfS HA XVIII, pp. 32–33.

46 The religious organization 'Open Doors'—specialized in smuggling Bibles and religious literature into Eastern Europe—was also one of the HA XX's central objectives. Cf. De Graaf, *Über die Mauer*, pp. 85–88; Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter*, volume 3, p. 142.

47 'Gegevens Stasi zijn onbetrouwbaar', *De Volkskrant*, 12 December 2004. 'Stasi-stukken verbazen Jan van Putten niet', *NRC Handelsblad*, 8 December 2004. 'Studie over Stasi en IKV roept verzet op', *Trouw*, 8 December 2004. This discussion was brought about by the publication of my PhD thesis, *Over de Muur*, on 6 December 2004.

48 As quoted by Herman Schlösser, 'Gedächtniswissenschaft', *Wiener Zeitung* (Extra Lexikon), 16 March 2001. Cf. also a discussion about this topic in the German Parliament: Deutscher Bundestag, *Plenarprotokoll* 13/237, 27 May 1998, p. 21808.

49 Helmut Müller-Enbergs, 'Die Stunde Null der nachrichtendienstlichen Ausbildung in der DDR aus dissonanztheoretischer Sicht', in Siegfried Schwan and Sven Max Litzcke (eds), *Nachrichtenpsychologie 4*, Brihl/Rheinland, 2006, pp. 21–85, here: 22–24.

50 As quoted in *ibid.* Cf. also Peter Richter and Klaus Rösler, *Wolfs West-Spione: Ein Insider-Report*, Berlin: Elefanten Press Verlag GmbH, 1992.

51 HVA, 'Information über die Militärpolitik und die Streitkräfte der Niederlande', 29 May 1974. BStU HVA Nr. 108, pp. 156–158. HVA,

Information über einige Aspekte der Innen- Aussen und Militärpolitik der Niederlande, 2 August 1974. MfS HVA Nr. 110, Teil 2 v. 2, pp. 215–218.

52 Cf. Reports from a *Materialablage* on the IKV from 1987 onwards. BStU MfS ZMA XX 1993, Band 2, here p. 31.

53 Siegfried Suckut, ‘Seismografische Aufzeichnungen. Der blick des MfS auf Staat und GEsellschaft in der DDR am Beispiel der Berichte an die SED-Führung 1976’, in Gieseke (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft*, pp. 99–128, here: 100.

54 Jens Gieseke, ‘Annäherungen und Fragen’, in Gieseke (ed.), *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft*, pp. 79–98, here: 79.

55 Ibid, p. 82.

56 Gieseke, ‘Annäherungen’, in Gieseke (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft*, p. 83.

57 HA XX/4, ‘Einschätzung der Aktivitäten des Interkirchlichen Friedensrates der Niederland gegenüber der DDR’, 8 January 1988. BStU MfS ZMA XX 1993, Band 2, p. 52.

58 Cf., for example, HA XX ‘Besprechung IKV’, Berlin 14 June 1988. BStU, OV ‘Integration’, pp. 77–79. Abteilung XX/4, ‘Protokoll zur durchgeführten Absprache in der HA XX/4 am 15.3.89’, Rostock, 22 March 1989. BStU, OV ‘Integration’, pp. 87–89.

59 ‘Bericht über den offiziellen Besuch des Generalsekretärs des ZK der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der DDR, Genossen Reich Honecker, vom 3. bis 5. Juni 1987 im Königreich der Niederlande’, BArch SAPMO, DY 30, 2472.

60 HA XX/4, ‘Neue Erkenntnisse und Erfahrungen zur gegnerischen Kontaktpolitik/Kontakttätigkeit und ihrer wirksamen politisch-operativen Bekämpfung’, Berlin, 8 September, pp. 1–9, here: a handwritten comment on page 9.

61 HVA, 'Information über den militärischen Beitrag der Niederlande zu den Streitkräften der NATO, 29.5.1987'. BStU HVA Nr. 47, pp. 60–73.

62 HVA, 'Information über einige aktuelle Aspekte...', 22 May 1987. BStU MfS HVA Nr. 47, pp. 85–91.

63 Suckut, 'Seismographische Aufzeichnungen', in Gieseke (ed.), *Staat und Gesellschaft*, pp. 119–121.

64 Ibid, p. 96.

65 Cf. also Frank Joestel, 'Zentrale Parteiinformationen', in Gieseke (ed.), *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft*, pp. 129–156.

66 Cf. exchange of letters between the HVA/*Abteilung III*, the HA XX/1 and the *Bezirksverwaltung für Staatssicherheit* Schwerin/Abt. XX, 6 March 1987, 14 March 1987 and 8 April 1987. BStU MfS HA XX 11056/92, pp. 151–152.

67 HVA, 'Information über einige aktuelle Aspekte...', 22 May 1987. BStU MfS HVA Nr. 47, pp. 85–91.

68 Eva Horn, 'Das wissen vom Feind. Erkenntnis und Blindheit von Geheimdiensten', in Wolbert K. Schymidt, u.a., *Geheimhaltung und Transparenz. Demokratische Kontrolle der Geheimdienste im internationalen Vergleich*, Berlin: Fischer, 2007, pp. 257–277, here: 262–263.

69 Jessen, 'Staatssicherheit, SED und Öffentlichkeit', in Gieseke, *Staatssicherheit und Gesellschaft*, 162.

Part III

Scientific-technical and military intelligence

11

The crown jewels and the importance of scientific-technical intelligence

Kristie Macrakis

Despite the fact that the foreign intelligence unit of the Ministry for State Security (MfS, or Stasi)—the HVA (*Hauptverwaltung A*—Main Directorate A)—legally destroyed most of their operational files after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) managed to obtain copies of East German intelligence’s “crown jewels,” a compendium of all of their agents compiled on index cards. This chapter uses the newly released material to assess the importance of scientific-technical intelligence in the HVA’s operations and answers the questions: Who were agents? Where did they work? Why did they spy?

The CIA-acquired “Rosenholz” material reveals that almost half of all agents planted in Western institutions belonged to the foreign intelligence’s unit for scientific-technical intelligence gathering, the Sector for Science and Technology (*Sektor für -wissenschaftliche-technische Aufklärung* (SWT)). This astounding fact demonstrates the significance of science and technology collection for the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War, as well as the division’s success at placing and recruiting agents.

The large number of science spies is even more surprising because so few of them were brought to public light and prosecuted after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Out of 253 convictions by 1999, only a handful were agents from this division. Both the public and West German counter-intelligence were more interested in political cases. As a counter-intelligence official put it: political espionage “hurts the most.” Moreover, Western companies and managers had no interest in unmasking spies; it could damage their image. The industrial sector wanted to sweep the cases under the rug. As a result, many Stasi science spies continued as usual after the phase of prosecution related to the Stasi ended in the 1990s.¹

The sector for science and technology

The SWT was one of the biggest units within the HVA (see Figures [11.1](#) and [11.2](#)). Four out of 21 departments belonged to the SWT, along with three working groups by its demise in 1989. In addition to the three operational departments, XIII (basic research, physics, etc.), XIV (electronics, computers, etc.) and

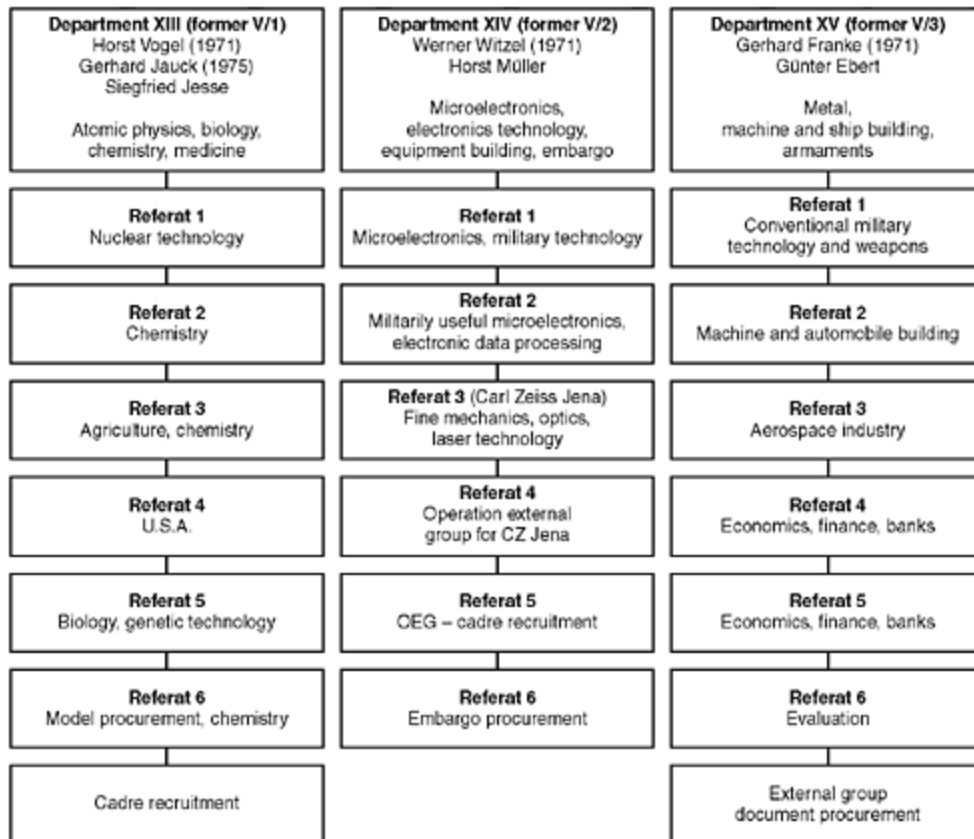


Figure 11.1 The structure of the SWT (operations unit).

XV (military technology, banks, the economy, etc.) it had its own evaluation department, V. There were about 500 leaders and case officers at headquarters.

The SWT's primary task was to acquire scientific-technical information from the West, bring it back to the East and make it available to indigenous industry. The lion's share of military intelligence was passed on to the Soviet Union through their liaison officer.

The SWT made headline news in 1979 when case officer Werner Stiller defected to the West, bringing with him tens of thousands of documents and enough information to keep several Western intelligence agencies busy for many years, catching and convicting agents. Despite this spectacular defection, the media focused more on the personality of Werner Stiller and less on the importance of scientific-technical intelligence for Eastern Bloc espionage.²

The CIA's big secret

All the valuable historical files from the HVA were destroyed, yet we know who the secret agents were because the CIA managed to obtain a gritty, barely read

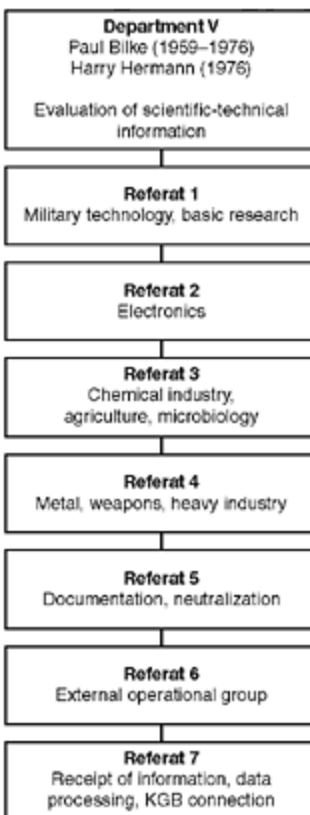


Figure 11.2 The structure of the SWT (evaluation unit).

able microfilm copy. The thousands of dossiers on agents and support staff, the officer's personnel files, and all the operational files and reports were

destroyed primarily to protect the agents' identities (and also presumably to cover up wrongdoing). The securing of the complete agent card file allowed the Stasi's adversaries to realize the spy agency's worst fears: the revelation of the identity of all their agents, including their cover and real names. This subsequently led to a massive hunt for agents and attempts to prosecute them.

President George Bush inspired the CIA to go hunting for the Stasi files. As the revolution had been televised on CNN, the whole world, including President Bush, had seen the storming and looting of Normannenstrasse. He asked the CIA in January 1990 if it was "getting its hands on the documents floating out onto the streets of East Berlin." When CIA director William Webster heard that the answer was no, he asked Milt Bearden, head of the Soviet/East European Division, if they "needed new people in Berlin." Inactivity quickly turned into frenzied, aggressive recruitment of informants and the search for interesting files.³

Because phone calls to Stasi officers were not effective, the CIA began to knock on doors, offering cash for information. They did manage to find some low-level officers who provided material, but leaders like the head of the America division and Markus Wolf proved to be recalcitrant, and turned down lucrative offers and the promise of resettlement in California in exchange for big agents or names of Americans working for the Stasi. The CIA's pitches had become so aggressive that the head of the American division invited Werner Großmann to come to his apartment to threaten CIA officers. David Rolph, the CIA's East Berlin station chief, was "dumbfounded" when Grossman told him that they would go to the police if the harassment continued and then to the press. He was relieved that he was not arrested or ambushed and kidnapped by Stasi "goons."⁴

Whereas CIA officers have described two "tranches" of material they obtained from the Stasi, they have never acknowledged the existence of the most secret and important operation, or the question of how they acquired the foreign spy files and who handed them over. The first "tranch" of Stasi material into the hands of the CIA came in January 1990 from a counter-intelligence officer, Rainer Wiegand, who sold three "red folders" on American agents working in East Germany. Through these files they

learned that every agent they had in East Germany had been a double agent working for East Germany. In the spring of 1990, the CIA obtained thousands of wiretap orders recorded on 17,000 index files documenting the telephone intercepts of a large number of prominent West Germans.⁵

But the files the CIA really wanted—sensitive operations involving the HVA and the KGB—were “still out of reach.” In his monumental book, which told the “inside story” on the “CIA’s final showdown with the KGB,” the colorful, cowboy-boot-wearing bear of a man, former Soviet/East European division chief, Milt Bearden, was disappointed in the “banal, neighborly betrayals” that filled the file drawers dissidents had yanked open. It was only later that the CIA realized several trusted Stasi officers had already transported the most sensitive files to the East Berlin airport, where they would be flown to Moscow. But Bearden tells us nothing about the most important Stasi material—the foreign spy files—or how the CIA obtained it. He leaves us hanging at the East Berlin airport as he watches a plane take off to Moscow.⁶

Everyone who has been interested in this mystery of mysteries has either followed the trail of the microfilmed agent card files to Moscow or speculated that they were obtained directly from a Stasi officer, Rainer Hemmann. Once the files were in Moscow, the CIA then allegedly bought them for a sum of \$ 1 million from the Soviet liaison officer, Alexander Prinzpalov, by means of an agent posing as a military historian, James Atwood. Yet that story was hard to trace because the protagonists had one thing in common: they were all dead.⁷

Another plausible version of how the CIA acquired the coveted agent card file is set forth by Robert Gerry Livingston and deflates the image of a brilliant operation or the theory that the agency had a mole placed in Moscow. Instead, it reflects the way in which many successes were achieved by the CIA during the Cold War: through a walk-in—a disenchanted KGB officer allegedly walked into the American Embassy in an Eastern European capital in 1992, carrying a briefcase with the microfilms and offered to sell them for a mere \$75,000.⁸ Yet the story told to Dr. Livingston could be disinformation. It is also possible that Prinzpalov simply walked into the embassy in Berlin or that the CIA

bought the files directly from him at KGB headquarters in Karlshorst and the files never arrived in Moscow. After all, he died under murky circumstances: supposed “heart problems.”

This still-anonymous KGB officer was not alone in seeking money and asylum in the West after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Whereas there had always been a trickle of Soviet walk-ins during the Cold War, the torn-down wall was like a breached levy: a flood of Soviets came to the East Berlin US embassy in the summer of 1990, seeking political asylum. David Rolph was screening four Soviet walk-ins per week—usually tourists who had bought a ticket for a bus vacation in East Germany.⁹

As the Soviet Union began to collapse, the flood of asylum seekers spread themselves out to other Eastern Bloc countries, and some even tried an escape from Moscow through secret services. The most spectacular Soviet defector in 1992 was Vasili Mitrokhin, who was exfiltrated to England by MI-6. He had actually gone to the American Embassy in Moscow first but was turned down. Luckily, the CIA did not turn away the KGB officer—if this story is true—who offered the copy of the HVA microfilms—a treasure trove for any spy agency.

Rosenholz

Dirk Dörrenberg and his colleagues from German counter-intelligence obtained a few select cases from the CIA’s collection that Milt Bearden had delivered personally to the federal chancellor’s office in 1992, on a silver platter. Dörrenberg and his colleagues, however, became very irritated with the state of the material. It had been “laundered” by an outsourcing firm, which retyped it with numerous spelling and typing errors. When the BStU received the material in 2004 it demanded the originals and had to re-do the database mask. German counter-intelligence later codenamed the operation “Rosenholz” (Rosewood), after they were allowed to go to Langley and take notes on the files in pencil. Like the VENONA decoding operation against Soviet espionage in America, the term was a random, computer-generated word. And, like VENONA, the secret files would soon uncover an army of secret agents operating in the West.

Rosenholz demonstrates the primacy of scientific espionage, but the material also reveals some surprising patterns about agents, motivation and the Stasi's practice of human intelligence (HUMINT) gathering. It allows us to reconstruct agent networks and to determine where agents were planted in the West, who they were, why they spied, and how they communicated.

As part of its secret bureaucratic system, the Stasi maintained two sets of index cards on its unofficial staff members: one card, labeled F-16, contains their real name, birth date, address, registration number, and where they worked or studied. The other card, labeled F-22, simply lists their codename, registration number, the name of the case officers who recruited or ran the agent and the number of files on the agent. It is only when the cards are viewed together that one can attach a codename to a real name. But piecing together identities had one obstacle—a number of unofficial staff members and agent acquaintances were listed under the same registration number; one can only correctly determine the actual agent by comparing the birth date.

Yet another document—the agent data sheet—can help solve the puzzle of which real names matched up with which codenames, because it lists the birth date. Domestic unofficial staff members were not included. The data provided a way for the HVA to obtain an overview of all their agents in the West, including information on how they were recruited, their motivation, their profession, the type of agent they were, and the communication methods used and where they worked.

In the early 1970s, the HVA began to annually microfilm its files and cards. With heightened military tensions and the fear of nuclear war in the early 1980s, they began to differentiate Western agents into three categories in case of international crisis or war—the so-called “mobilization” file. Situation I applied to an agent of lesser value who need not be contacted in case of crisis or war. Situation II meant that contact should be maintained in a period of high tension and Situation III meant that contact should be maintained with the agent in a time of war.¹⁰

Initially, the CIA used the card index to neutralize former agents by ensuring they did not continue to work for the KGB, since presumably the KGB had seen the file and maybe even had another copy. The CIA also

may have turned some agents to work for them. But they never imagined their secret espionage coup would become public knowledge.

As arrests of former Stasi agents made headline news, rumors began to spread that the CIA had obtained secret foreign spy files previously thought destroyed. In 1997 the arrest and trial of three Americans—the so-called radical trio—made headline news in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. In Germany, the arrest of Rainer Rupp (“Topas”) in 1994 fanned fear among all the former agents who still remained hidden. Whereas early spy catching and prosecutions had occurred because of defections and tips from case officers, a second phase of roundups happened after West Germany obtained the Rosenholz material.

As the public became aware of the CIA-acquired card index popularly called “Rosenholz,” pressure began to mount for them to return the microfilms to Germany. Again, the primary pressure came from German dissidents and citizens’ groups who thought more domestic informants could be unmasked. After many years of negotiations and strained American-German relations, in 2003 some of the Rosenholz material—only the German nationals—was returned to Germany and to the BStU on CDs. Researchers could obtain some information starting in 2004. During a luncheon, Milt Bearden quipped that “we’ll return all the material when they return the Egyptian Art at the Berlin Island Museum.”¹¹

German security officials had already collected a number of leads on former agents from case officers willing to turn them in or testify as witnesses in trials. When the CIA cards surfaced, the German equivalent of the FBI—the Federal Criminal Office (*Bundeskriminalamt* or BKA)—and counter-intelligence were still knocking on doors, offering immunity from prosecution in exchange for information. Through this process they had identified 300 former agents. After obtaining access to the CIA-acquired card file, a second wave of investigations and arrests began. The courts could hardly handle the number of cases: out of thousands of investigations, only 257 convictions followed. Interestingly, only about a dozen of those convictions were in science and technology.

Even though a former officer responsible for rocket science, Frank Weigelt, acting sub-department head of SWT XV, had defected to Western counter-

intelligence in 1990, Rainer Engberding, chief spycatcher at the BKA, complained that very few science officers were providing leads and testifying compared to their political counterparts.

The value of the agent-identifying information increased significantly with the emergence of yet another foreign spy database in 1998—this time at the Stasi archives. The *Spiegel* cover story dramatized it as “Markus Wolf’s last secret” and a “sensational discovery.”¹² The System for Information, Research and Evaluation (SIRA) contained a database coded on old-fashioned reel-to-reel magnetic tape that listed and rated all the material delivered by agents, including a description of the company the material flowed to in East Germany. Whereas SIRA helped us measure the type and quantity of material, Rosenholz added flesh to those bones by providing us with information that can answer the questions of who the spies were, where they worked and when, and even why they spied.

Who were they?

In 1999 the SIRA database left us with a tantalizing list of cover names attached to thousands of pieces of scientific, technological, or military information. But a cover name does not tell us anything about the person who volunteered or was persuaded to betray his or her country. Such information stimulates curiosity: Who was hidden behind the codename “Dora,” “Zelter” or “Test”? Who did they plant at Siemens or IBM or Hewlett Packard? Were professors or leading managers stealing secrets and passing them on to the East? Were they migration agents from the East or a West German recruited as a student who worked his or her way into a company of the Stasi’s choice?

The Rosenholz material helped us personify the cryptic codenames by revealing the real names, addresses, and workplaces of agents and backup staff. Despite potential tediousness, the recovered foreign department skeletal material lends itself best to statistical analysis.

At first glance, the most striking image that emerges regarding who the sources were is the number of small fish in the large lake run by the sector. There are very few prestigious German sources. Aside from lacking many

stellar sources in key institutions, few professors or bank managers or leaders in their fields emerge among the 300 sources and backup staff in the West. This may be more surprising to the layman than to the intelligence professional.

Among professionals it is common wisdom that the best source is low level — a secretary with good access to secrets, a chauffeur or, as the classic novel *Our Man in Havana* by Graham Greene depicts, a vacuum cleaner salesman who becomes a spy to earn extra money. Similar to Greene's literary spy, who concocts an imaginary world of secret agents, the real-life science spy often exaggerated the importance of the scientific material passed on. Seemingly valuable blueprints could turn out to have belonged to an item as everyday as a vacuum cleaner.

The sector aimed a little higher than vacuum cleaner salesmen. About 25 agents were secretaries, students, production workers and repairmen—not highly qualified scientists or engineers—but some of them had access to secret material. One agent was a German assemblyman at the US Army in Augsburg (“Acker”), one a locksmith at a factory (“Bauer”), another a book binder at the Max Planck Institute in Göttingen (“Protokoll”), while a librarian with a degree in library science (“Irmgard Krüger”) at the massive library in West Berlin—known as the Stabi—could win a prize for delivering the most material—some 3,000 pieces of information in 19 years of spy work. Of course none of it was secret, just unavailable in the East and, therefore, received average marks from the evaluators (mostly IIIs). Nevertheless, it is amazing what you can find at the library: her collection activities were all over the map, from information on ballistics, aerodynamics, uranium, metals, the space program, military technology and the environment to a milk economy research report (which received a low grade of V).^{[13](#)}

The majority of sources were male, salaried employees at companies at which electronics played the leading role. Professionally, that group consisted of many engineers or men with college degrees in science. But a number of sources also worked in personnel departments, were businessmen, and a few were officers at the US Army base in Augsburg.

Top sources were not necessarily leaders in their field or heads of departments or even scientists. Several of the most important sources were salaried employees like engineer Dieter Feuerstein (“Petermann”) at MBB, who passed on top-secret military plans; Peter Alwardt (“Alfred”) at AEG/Telefunken, who worked as an engineer; and Peter Köhler (“Schulze”), who worked for Texas Instruments and earned 500,000 marks in ten years from his agent salary.^{[14](#)}

A well-regarded physics professor at the University of Bielefeld, Peter Stickel (codenamed “Pfeiffer”), was a most curious case. Born in Leipzig in 1932, he was a member of the SED and was recruited in 1955 while he was a physics student at the Humboldt University by one of the sector’s founding fathers, Willi Neumann, on the basis of ideology. He was sent to the West in 1956 and studied physics, becoming a professor of high-energy physics at the University of Bielefeld. When Werner Stiller defected in 1979, “Pfeiffer” was detained and questioned but never prosecuted. Although there were seven volumes of material in his file by 1984, he stopped passing on information in 1980, after the Stiller blowup. He may have provided the Stasi with information on other physicists, but he passed on very little material that was of minimal importance.^{[15](#)}

Although, there were few professors in the lot, the Technical University in Aachen seemed to be a special target because of its excellence in the applied sciences and engineering. None of the three professors recruited there in the 1980s was especially productive or important. Two of the sources—“Natur” and “Test”—did not deliver much material and had the same case officer, a development engineer, Thomas Ruß. “Ahrendt” delivered some information for four years then quit. Several West German sources became professors after their spy career was over and were not caught or prosecuted during the capturing wave of the 1990s. Particularly noteworthy is “Frieze” (Manfred Bartel), recruited in 1974 on the basis of ideology; he delivered copious and valuable material when he worked for Siemens and the Technical University in Berlin from 1980 to 1988. He later became a professor at a leading trade school for electronics.^{[16](#)}

There were about as many agents who were “leaders” as there were agents who were lower level or not scientists, but on closer inspection it turns out

that many of these sources simply owned their own firm. Two of the division's most productive sources in computing during the 1980s —“Zelter” (Fritz H., a physicist [Last name not legible on card file]) and “Dora” (Peter Dölling, an engineer) —owned their own firms and escaped prosecution. “Zelter” was recruited in 1986 based on greed, knew Arabic, and delivered more than 1,000 pieces of valuable information in three years on microelectronics, as well as an implanter in 1988. “Dora,” recruited in 1978 also based on monetary interest, passed on more than 700 pieces of information, including timely material about the VAX machine from DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation). In 2000, Peter Dölling founded Defense AG, an IT-security firm, whereas Fritz H. disappeared.¹⁷

Many of the sources had some sort of connection to East Germany—some left for the West with their family as children, some had relatives there, and some had business to do there. That connection may have made them more sympathetic to a pitch by an East German playing on that sentiment. Like other spy agencies, the HVA preyed on human weaknesses, but simultaneously those with problems often simply volunteered. Several volunteers had drinking or personal problems or were womanizers.

The agent in an interesting place—an enemy spy agency, high-profile companies like IBM or Siemens, a defense contractor, the foreign office, or the chancellor's office—was, of course, at the center of the web of humans. In addition to these “object sources,” who were planted or recruited at institutions, the HVA had “information sources” and contact people. Information sources (or *Abschöpfungsquellen*) could either be pumped for information about a topic like science or technology, or they sometimes were similar to object sources. Contact people were simply contacts, not official, and officers approached them either with a cover story or false-flag operation. Sometimes contacts were high-profile figures that refused to sign an agreement indicating that they worked officially for the Stasi. By 1988 the SWT had 68 contact people and 146 object and information sources. A source at an important institution was the most highly prized type of agent.

About as many people served as support and backup staff as those who stole secrets from the institution. Although there were about 146 object and information sources, there were another 120 West German support and

backup staff. The backup staff consisted of recruiters, couriers, helpers, “security IMs,” and a handful of people who offered cover addresses and safe houses. This does not include the instructors, who were all East German.^{[18](#)}

Most of the women involved played supporting roles as couriers and assisted their husband’s spy activities. One-third of all backup staff were women. Wives were also often brought in to support their husbands as a security measure—to ensure that they would be involved and have a motive to not turn their husbands in to the authorities.

Even though the HVA’s secretary spies made headline news during the 1970s, and this would lead one to believe that the MfS used many women spies, only about one-fifth of all unofficial staff at the SWT (54 out of 260) were women.

There were only ten women object sources. Five of these sources were secretaries and another five white-collar employees, including one PhD biologist, “Ramona,” (Dr. Cornelia Nauen) who worked at the European Union in Brussels. Of course, secretaries can be the most valuable agents, since they have the same access to secret files as their bosses. The MfS was notorious for recruiting secretaries at the Bonn governmental offices through male “Romeos,” who recruited them using love. Most of those duped secretaries made headline news in the 1970s; one committed suicide. None of the secretaries at the SWT were recruited through Romeos; rather a mix of ideology and materialistic interests were at play. They were important agents, and object sources, like “Ilona” (Katherina Straub), who worked at MBB, the defense contractor, as a secretary and office manager. She was recruited by the rocket science department on the basis of ideology in 1963 and between 1972 and 1982 delivered more than 280 very valuable pieces of information on sensitive weapons systems, secret military satellites, space program policies, secret NATO files, secret military plans, and even sensitive American aerospace secrets and cruise missile information.^{[19](#)}

Where were they?

During the 35 years of its existence, the HVA managed to penetrate West Germany's most sensitive institutions, ranging from the chancellor's office and foreign office to intelligence and security agencies to their most prestigious scientific and technical establishments. In 1989 the SWT had agents planted at internationally competitive companies like IBM, Siemens, AEG/Telefunken, SEL, Texas Instruments, and DEC.

The defense contractor MBB was particularly hard-hit throughout the Cold War and its secrets were quickly passed on to the Soviet Union. Dieter Feuerstein was not the first agent the MfS and the KGB had placed at the prestigious MBB firm. It was one of the Eastern Bloc's main targets. One of the most important and damaging agents, Manfred Rotsch, was caught in 1986 after he had agreed more than 30 years before, in 1954, to work for the KGB and MfS. Rotsch, a mechanical engineer, was sent to the West with the stream of émigrés fleeing and worked at various airplane-building firms before taking up a position at MBB in 1969 in space research. At his trial he justified his actions by saying that once he gave the KGB an inch they wanted a mile.^{[20](#)}

Another important post-Wall agent was Franz M., an engineer who worked for the MfS for 24 years and delivered information on the Starfighter and Phantom and an MBB helicopter project.^{[21](#)} MBB was clearly an important object successfully penetrated by the MfS, ultimately for the KGB. In fact, the SIRA files reveal that the MfS had 19 sources from different departments who had access to and provided material from MBB to the MfS in the 1980s.^{[22](#)}

The SWT ran a sprinkling of agents at Max Planck Institutes, TH-Aachen, and TH-Berlin; a number of agents at smaller, often independently owned businesses; and a large contingent of self-employed businessmen.

Perhaps the most striking find from Rosenholz and SIRA material is the large number of agents planted at Siemens companies in West Germany. This is surprising because of the Eastern Bloc's previous interest in IBM. In earlier years, particularly in the late 1960s and 1970s, the MfS ran several important agents at IBM, such as Gerhard Praeger and Gerhard Arnold, who were caught, and "Bill," an American, who was not. By 1989, there

appeared to be only two main sources at IBM—“Birke” (Wilhelm Paproth) and “Stein” (Lutz Rodig, a volunteer who presented himself at Robtron).²³

Although Siemens had always been an important target, the West never knew that it had been heavily penetrated, because the chief migration agents sent to the West in the 1950s were never caught. By 1989, the SWT ran ten major object sources at various Siemens companies, and a number of other sources also delivered material from this prestigious institution, which was sprawled throughout Germany and the world. Information stolen from Siemens was not limited to computer technology; other companies, including Siemens communication and medical technologies, were penetrated as well. In addition to recruiting West Germans, the HVA had managed to plant several major East German migration agents at Siemens during the 1950s, including two engineers—“Rode” (Peter Oswald Cyron—emigrated in 1956) and “German” (Günter Gerson—emigrated in 1954). The electrical engineer migration resident “Gustav” (Charlie C.) moved to West Germany in 1958 and worked out of Siemens’ largest office in Munich.²⁴

“Günter” (Eckhard Schlobohm) was one of the few Siemens agents caught, tried, and convicted of espionage in 1995, after West German officials were allowed to review the Rosenholz material. Originally from Thüringen in the East, “Günter” opted to move to West Germany in 1957 after he failed to get into an engineering program. While he was studying electrical engineering in Karlsruhe, he made frequent trips home to visit his mother in the East. Because of these trips he came to the attention of the MfS and was targeted by Dieter Gladitz, an SWT officer posing as an official from the Ministry for Higher Education, who claimed to be interested in material about higher education in West Germany. “Günter” did not complete the engineering degree but obtained a BA in economics and soon secured a position at Siemens in Munich in 1969 in the area of data processing. Despite his university scholarship; his spy training in radio, codes, and secret writing; and an agent salary of almost 100,000 marks over the 30 years of cooperation, Günter’s material was not considered especially valuable by SWT evaluators. During his 20 years at Siemens, he only delivered 212 pieces of information, the majority of which only received the low grade of III in the rating scale (I being the highest grade, V being

the lowest). His material was passed on to Robotron in Dresden, but the HVA was more interested in IBM, and later DEC. His espionage career did not cause much damage to the West and he therefore only received a light sentence of one year and three months.²⁵

Not surprisingly, given the espionage emphasis on computing, electronic companies had the largest number of agents. During the 1970s and 1980s the HVA shifted its computer espionage focus from IBM to two other American firms with branches in West Germany—Texas Instruments and DEC. One of the most important computer espionage sources was Peter Köhler (“Schulze”), who collected material from Texas Instruments.

The HVA had a long-standing interest in SEL (Standard Electric Lorenz), one of West Germany’s most important firms that worked on communication technology, and had already planted two migration agents there in the 1950s: “Otto” (Gerhard Müller) and “Jürgen” (Andreas Berndt), who were both convicted after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Like Siemens and SEL, the “Gorbachev” case highlighted the Stasi interest in AEG/Telefunken. When that source started to dry up, two HVA agents were recruited there in the 1970s: “Alfred” (Peter Alwardt) and “Filter” (Horst Lang).

Why did they spy?

When spies were unmasked both during and after the Cold War, their personal motivations for spying fascinated both the public and espionage professionals alike. Early Cold War spies like the Cambridge Five were often paraded as ideological spies, and, by the 1980s, they were seen as the last of a special breed. Increasingly, spies’ motives focused on their need for money. Especially in America it seemed that spying was an easy way to make tax-free income. High-profile cases like the John Walker spy ring, exposed in 1985, drew public attention to the greedy naval officer who traded secrets for more than \$ 1 million from the KGB. When Aldrich Ames, the CIA officer, was caught in 1994, his Jaguar, big house, capped teeth, and enormous credit card bills were flashed on TV as his motive for spying. He was likely the highest-paid agent in history, collecting \$2.7

million in agent salary in ten years. As a top Russian official commented: “There’s no romance here.... Americans do it for money.”²⁶

In Germany also, it seemed as though there was a shift from ideological to materialistic motivation. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, cynics retorted that the many caught Stasi agents spied for the money. They could point to Klaus Kuron, head of counter-intelligence in the West, who needed money to finance his children’s education and to supplement his meager salary. Peter Köhler (“Schulze”) is considered one of the HVA’s highest-paid agents; he cashed in 500,000 marks in eleven years (1978–1989).²⁷ Those spies who helped import embargoed technology to the East most likely drew in the biggest profits. Even so, none of the West German Stasi agents made as much as their American counterparts.

On the other end of the spectrum were the voices of the agents and HVA leaders, who claimed most of their spies were motivated by ideology. Their agents were “scouts for freedom,” not lowly “spies.” Writing in 2003, the group calling itself “Scouts for Freedom” claimed ideological reasons for spying. The opening quotation of the book, which was written by Klaus von Raussendorff, an HVA agent who worked at the West German Foreign Office, claims to summarize the 31 agents’ motives for spying: “All of us had the same motivation— to make a contribution to protecting the first socialist state in Germany and thereby serving peace.”²⁸

With the return of the Rosenholz documentation, the dispute about agent motivation can be settled. The results for the SWT are surprising: a count reveals that the recruitment motive for Germans was split almost evenly between ideology and money, with ideology as a basis for recruitment leading by a handful.²⁹ In about a dozen cases, both ideology and money played a role as a motive for recruitment. There were also other motives outside these two chief reasons: several agents were recruited using a false-flag operation (the recruiter pretends to work for a friendly spy agency of another country) or personal affection for the recruiter or case officer.

Whereas some, like the HVA, like to use the “bipolar” explanation—either money or ideology—as a motive for recruitment or spying, others refer to the more differentiated MICE model: money, ideology, compromise and

ego.³⁰ On closer inspection of specific cases, motives for spying often become more complex. Whereas the agent candidate might have appeared to have spied for ideology, he or she may also have had a personal reason attached to the ideology.

As a supplement to the terse one-word summary contained in the Rosenholz material, we can use trial testimony and agent memoirs to add some flesh to the bones of the issue of motivation. On numerous occasions, a science spy was recruited with the question, “Would you like to do something to contribute to peace?” Recruiting an agent using ideology was a patient process; it did not happen overnight. Case officers and instructors spent hours discussing politics with their agents, and it was through the gentle art of persuasion that they convinced their targets that the East was a peace-loving nation resisting the aggressive, militaristic imperialists in the West.

The argument for supporting world peace worked surprisingly well with agents who were guided into military installations. Peter Alwardt (codenamed “Alfred”) had numerous political discussions with his case officer, Günter Blayer, who he met at the Leipzig Trade Fair, before he agreed to spy for ideological reasons. He was also invited to numerous barbecues at an East German safe house and given a thorough tour of the country. When he was studying physics in Hamburg during the early 1970s, he became friends with other students who were members of the German Communist Party and considered joining. Meanwhile, he had met Blayer and then had another alternative: “Slowly, I came to the conclusion that I could most effectively contribute to world peace through secret service activity in the GDR in the military area.” Although he “loved differential geometry” and theoretical physics, he shifted his emphasis to more applied areas to better serve his new masters. He then landed an engineering job at AEG/Telefunken in 1984, working on developing propulsion methods for torpedoes.³¹

Dieter Feuerstein recalls that his case officer once quipped, “If the enemy is no longer there, they can’t disturb the peace.”³²

Whether they were misguided or misled idealists or greedy, crass materialists, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, “Stasi spy” had become a term

of opprobrium in Germany, because of the conflation of domestic snitches with foreign agents. However hard they tried, the foreign agent had an image problem. This is far from the case in Russia, where a former KGB man, Vladimir Putin, rules and where Richard Sorge adorns postage stamps and is lionized with large statutes in Moscow.

Among American intelligence professionals, ideological conviction is considered the best way to motivate someone, but it is also considered very rare.³³ Those American handlers would be surprised and envious of the number of spies in Germany who were allegedly motivated by ideological conviction. There is clearly a country-specific cultural and social difference for motivation.

The human web

When the CIA returned copies of the Rosenholz material relating to German nationals to Germany, newspaper headlines blared that the Stasi had planted 280,000 agents in West Germany since the 1950s; that was the number of card files electronically reproduced on the CDs labeled Rosenholtz (the “t” was erroneously added by the CIA). There is no doubt that the Stasi had an enormous number of agents, but this figure astronomically inflates the reality. Whereas the number of names mentioned in the material may have reached 250,000, very few of the names or codenames are actual agents. Many of the names mentioned are people who either knew the agent or were associated with him or her, and the other names belong to the vast web of backup staff developed to support the agents. The support staff were the recruiters, instructors, couriers and residents. There appear to be 63,000 case files opened in the course of the HVA’s history.

The Stasi File Authority reported that there were likely 6,000 West Germans and 20,000 East Germans cataloged in the index cards who had worked for the HVA since the 1950s.³⁴ The CIA did not return copies of cards on US citizens or citizens of other nationalities. The enormous backup staff quietly helped recruit, run and handle agents as part of a vast web of people in the Eastern Bloc style of HUMINT gathering and communicating with headquarters. Although the flow of scientific-technical information

from the West to the East seemed efficient, Rosenholz reveals a surprisingly bloated HUMINT network.

Part of the reason for the emergence of such an intricate web of spy handlers was that East Germany had no Western embassies until 1972. Traditionally, case officers have worked under official cover at an embassy, where they are protected by diplomatic immunity. Because the MfS did not have a legal base for its case officers, it developed a large support staff to recruit and handle agents. This also reflected the KGB's style of running its illegals.

Before the establishment of embassies, the HVA often set up illegal residencies in the West to run and handle agents. Even after it had embassies to work out of, it relied more heavily on illegal residencies than on the traditional spy residencies at embassies. The Vienna residency for microelectronics was just one example of a high-profile illegal hub for spying.

The anchors of the residency—the “residents”—were East Germans who were resettled in the West—the so-called migration agents—and ran about three agents each. By 1989, there were only five SWT residents left in West Germany, and most of them had migrated there before 1961. “Gustav,” an electrical engineer who had been a migration agent sent to the West on Stasi orders in 1958 and planted at Siemens in Munich, was one of the most important residents still surviving by 1989. “Weißkopf” (Manfred Wittig), another migration agent sent to West Germany in 1961 after studying at the Technical University in Dresden, was a valuable resident for chemistry and even worked at Leybold in Köln. He directed three other sources in companies such as Hoechst and Bayer. Although “Reise” (August B.) was a less important resident in the service sector, he was tried but not convicted in 1994. All residents were liberally equipped with all the communication technology and methods available, from secret writing to shortwave radios, codes, mikrats and dead letter drops, in order to be able to communicate with headquarters. In fact, they received the most spy paraphernalia of any part of the network.³⁵

Because case officers were not allowed to recruit and handle agents in West Germany themselves, several new and important types of unofficial staff

members emerged that recruited and handled agents: the “recruiter” and the “instructor.” The instructor took on the handling role of the case officer and the recruiter took the spotting and enlistment role. Whereas an agent met with the case officer only several times a year in either East Germany or abroad in a city like Vienna, Budapest or even Zurich, the instructor met with the same agent on a regular basis, either near the agent’s home or in a third country like Yugoslavia, Austria or Italy. This was done to avoid dangerous trips to East Berlin.

About half of all SWT agents and recruiters had instructors to handle them in addition to a case officer. An instructor functioned like a case officer and was responsible for meeting with an agent abroad and providing political and personal coaching to keep the agent motivated. The instructor trained the agent, gave him or her written instructions from headquarters, passed on agent technology, and handed over the agent salary or travel reimbursement. They also retrieved the material and brought it back to East Germany. All the instructors were East Germans who could travel to the West. Once back in East Germany, the instructor met with the agent’s case officer, passed on the material, and wrote a report about the trip and the meeting with the agent. Instructors received extensive training, often lasting up to a year.³⁶

Many of the instructors were part of the state’s “travel cadre”—highly reliable Communist Party members who were allowed to travel to Western countries. In the SWT, most of the instructors were highly qualified scientists, scholars and professors, but also technicians. In fact, one is likely to find more PhDs and professors in the group of instructors than in the sources themselves.

Wolfgang Holle (codename “Hilmar Kohl”) was an instructor for several agents, including “Günter” (Eckard Schlobohm), a source at Siemens, and is an example of a prominent East German scientist motivated by ideology and advancement of his career. After receiving a BS in engineering, specializing in CAD/CAM data technology, from the Technical College in Ilmenau, Holle rose in the ranks there, becoming a professor in 1985. He had already come into contact with Western visitors in 1970 and 1971 and was, therefore, recruited to become a courier for, and later an instructor to, agents living in West Germany. After stepping down from his professor

chair in Ilmenau in 1993, Holle opened an engineering office, Montage-Design-Studio, in Suhl for assembling products using software.^{[37](#)}

Used to complement the role of the instructor and to cover the functions of an absent case officer, the recruiter was another type of staff member developed by the HVA. In 1988 the SWT had at least 33 recruiters living in West Germany from a wide range of professions, including students, production workers, whitecollar employees and university personnel. The large Working Group 3 for the acquisition of military technology had six recruiters, and the US division of basic research maintained the most recruiters—four—in one sub-department; several of these recruiters targeted students at the West Berlin universities or anyone who potentially had access to American technology.^{[38](#)}

Kurt Blaschke was a recruiter for the SWT computer department (Department XIV/2). Like many Western unofficial staff members, he had a familial relation with the GDR. Although his parents fled the East in 1956, they were socialistically inclined. Blaschke followed them to West Germany in 1957 after he was told, and refused, to distance himself from his disloyal parents. He moved to West Berlin in 1964 to avoid the draft. While living there he traveled to East Berlin frequently for political discussions. An MfS case officer was present at one of these discussions and suggested that Blaschke do something “active for securing freedom.” His first test run was to photograph US military installations near the US-occupied “Devil’s Mountain.”^{[39](#)}

Shortly before Blaschke returned to West Germany, he signed an official agreement in which it was clear he was working for the MfS as a spy and was given the codename “Litze.” The recruitment was based on ideology. In 1970 Blaschke got a job at AEG/Telefunken (later ANT) as a laboratory technician. Although he did not have access to secret material, he was actively involved in the Work Council at AEG/Telefunken and chair of the IG Metal Labor Union and, therefore, had many contacts and much personal information on potential recruits. As a result, he emerged as a recruiter for the SWT. He was told to provide reports on possible agent candidates for recruitment who had access to secret material.^{[40](#)}

Blaschke sent the MfS many names, but most of these leads turned out to be fruitless. He did, however, have success in recruiting a friend from the labor union who also worked at AEG/Telefunken, Horst Lang (“Filter”), who had been having marital problems and recently separated from his first wife. He was an electrical engineer and had access to secret material on pulse code modulation, a method for converting analog signals to digital. Lang was officially recruited as an object source in 1978, on the basis of ideology, after Blaschke took him to a meeting with his case officer in Berlin.⁴¹

With the Blaschke case we come full circle back to a seemingly insignificant figure—clearly an advantage in the area of recruitment. In addition to revealing who the spies were, where they worked, and why they did what they did, the Rosenholz material unmasks an incredibly bloated human web of recruiters, instructors, couriers and residents. The web was designed to support an agent, but, while it ensnared the secrets of the West, was not cost-effective. The Stasi simply overestimated the power of stolen technological secrets to solve its economic problems, and the enormous spy infrastructure investment produced a very small return.

Like the KGB, the Stasi had a formidable foreign intelligence arm. Whereas bookshelves have been filled with volumes on the KGB’s foreign operations, the Stasi is still predominantly known in the West for its internal repression of enemies of the state. In the secret intelligence world, however, the HVA was widely respected and admired for its achievements. Even so, no one suspected that science and technology played such a large and pivotal role in its operations. Despite the fact that the secret Rosenholz material was analyzed by Western officials and used to prosecute agents, no one revealed the extent to which the MfS penetrated Western science. Why not? After all, Russia continues to pursue its old habit of stealing scientific-technical secrets, even in the early twenty-first century. It was the Soviet Union that breathed life into the MfS during its beginnings, it was the Soviet Union that was the sole beneficiary of the stolen military secrets, and it was the Soviet Union that was behind the East Germans’ success.

Notes

1 Anonymous interview with the author, 26 July 2006.

2 For more information on the SWT and Werner Stiller, see Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008, chs. 2, 3, 4 and 6. Parts of this chapter are based on chapter 4. For more details: "Technology Transfer and Espionage in the Quest for Scientific-Technical: Prowess," *Science under Socialism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 1999, pp. 82–121. "Does Effective Espionage Lead to Success in Science and Technology? Lessons from the East German Ministry for State Security," *Intelligence and National Security*, 19, No. 1. Spring 2004, 51–75. "Führt effektive Spionage zu Erfolgen in Wissenschaft und Technik?" in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Engbers (ed.) *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu...DDR-Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003, pp. 250–278.

After my book was published, the Head of Sector, Horst Vogel, and his deputies, Horst Müller and Manfred Süß published: Horst Müller, Manfred Süß and Horst Vogel, *Die Industriespionage der DDR: die wissenschaftlich-technische Aufklärung der HVA*, Berlin: das neue Berlin (Edition Ost), 2008. Some of the material they include in the book was already communicated to me during interviews.

3 Milt Bearden and James Risen, *The Main Enemy: The Inside Story of the CIA's Final Showdown with the KGB*, New York: Random House, 2003, p. 420.

4 Ibid. pp. 439–440.

5 "Dumps" described by Robert Gerald Livingston in a lecture at the German Studies Association for a panel on the Rosenholz Files, 8 October 2004. See also Chapter 5 in this volume.

6 Milt Bearden and James Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 438.

7 This version was first published by the German magazine *Focus*: "Eine verhängnisvolle Affäre: Wie die US-Geheimdienst CIA in Moskau die komplette Agentendatei der DDR-Auslandsspionage erbeutete," *Focus*, 5, 1999, p. 32.

8 Robert Gerald Livingston and Georg Mascolo. “Das sind die Kronjuwelen,” *Der Spiegel*, 59, No. 16, 18 April 2005.

9 Milt Bearden and James Risen, *The Main Enemy*, p. 443.

10 Analysis of statistical sheets, which use the phrases “Situation I,” “II”, and “III.” See Livingston and Mascolo (“Das sind die Kronjuwelen”) for a brief discussion of the “war scare.”

11 Milt Bearden discussion with the author, 18 May 2006.

12 Georg Mascolo, Heiner Schimmöller and Hajo Schumacher. “Das Pharaonengrab der Stasi,” *Der Spiegel*, 55, No. 3, 1999, pp. 32–38.

13 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA material: “Irmgard Krüger.” Registration Number: XV/436/70. “Protokoll” (XV/4249/83), “Acker” (XV/5094/84), “Bauer” (XV/37/73).

14 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA material. “Petermann” (XV/245/73) (Dieter Feuerstein), “Alfred” (XV2189/72) (Peter A.) and “Schulze” (XV/28/79) (Peter Köhler).

15 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA: “Pfeiffer” (XV/18116/60) XIII/Ref. 1.

16 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA: “Natur” (XV/7928/81)—Professor Gerhard P. “Test” (XV/623/86)—Professor Jürgen W.HVA/XV/2. “Ahrendt” (XV/6824/82)—Professor Otmar K.O. “Frieze” BLN XV/2101/74.

17 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA: “Zelter.” Fritz H. XV/450/86. Department XV, Peter Großmann, case officer. “Dora.” Peter Dölling. XIV/2. Hubert Zwick, case officer.

18 Analysis of Rosenholz material.

19 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA material on “Ilona.” Reg. Nr. XV/3980/63. SIRA databases 11 and 12:280 pieces of information with a large share of Is and IIs.

20 Friedrich-Wilhelm Schlomann, *Operationsgebiet Bundesrepublik*, Munich: Universitas, 1984, 235–236.

21 Trial information.

22 BStU, SIRA: MBB. Of these 19 sources, eight come from SWT headquarter departments, five from Aussenstellen and four from other HVA departments.

23 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA material on “Birke” (Reg. Nr. XV/841/83) and “Stein” (Reg. Nr. XII/1416/85). See also trial judgment on Lutz Rodig.

24 This is based on an analysis of Rosenholz SWT data. See also Kristie Macrakis, “Does Effective Espionage Lead to Success in Science and Technology? Lessons from the East German Ministry for State Security,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 19, No. 1. Spring 2004, 51–75 for discussion of Siemens SIRA data results.

25 Rosenholz agent card files on “Günter,” Indictment against Eckard Schlobohm, 27 March 1995, Bavarian Court. Trial Judgment, 19 October 1995.

26 Adam Pertman, “Why They Spy,” *The Boston Globe*, 25 February 2001, p. E1.

27 Peter Köhler Conviction. Bavarian Highest Court. Trial Judgement. 3 St 14/93. 30 November 1993.

28 Klaus Eichner and Gotthold Schramm (eds), *Kundschafter im Westen*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 2003, frontispiece.

29 An analysis of the Rosenholz statistical sheets for the SWT show that about 103 IMs worked for the MfS for “material” reasons and about 124 for ideological reasons.

30 H.Keith Melton, *The Ultimate Spy Book*, London: DK Publishing, 1996, pp. 8–9.

31 Quote from Anon. “Ich war ‘Alfred’” (I was Alfred). In Klaus Eichner and Gotthold Schramm, *Kundschafter im Westen*, p. 291. See also trial material: Indictment of Dr Peter A. Der Generalbundesanwalt beim Bundesgerichtshof. 29 November 1997. Trial Judgment: Hanseatisches Oberlandesgericht. 23 April 1998.

32 Interview with the author, June 2005.

33 Thomas Powers’ 1988 introduction to John Marks, *The Search for the “Manchurian Candidate.” The CIA and Mind Control*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1979, Norton paperback, 1991, p. vii.

34 See www.bstu.de on Rosenholz and Andreas Förster. “Rosenholz: Schatz oder Schätzen,” *Berliner Zeitung*, 20 March 2004, p. 6.

35 BStU, Rosenholz and SIRA: “Weißkopf.” Manfred Wittig. XV/4466/61, Department XV/3. See also August B.’s indictment, 3 OJ’s 67/94. Düsseldorf, Germany.

36 Instructor definitions in Helmut Müller-Enbergs (ed.), *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Teil 2: Anleitungen für die Arbeit mit Agenten, Kundschaftern und Spionen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Berlin: Ch. Links Verlag, 1998.

37 Information on Wolfgang Holle from Eckard Schlobohm’s indictment, 27 March 1995, ObJs 129/94, p. 4. Bavarian Highest Court.

38 This is based on an analysis of the Rosenholz statistical sheets. BStU.

39 Trial Judgment, 10 October 1996. Kurt Blaschke and Horst Lang. Stuttgart Court.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid. See also Rosenholz card files and statistical sheet as corroboration.

12

The professionalization of Soviet military intelligence and its influence on the Berlin Crisis under Khrushchev

Matthias Uhl

The Soviet leadership's political guidelines for their secret services remain largely unknown to this day. However, they can now be reconstructed partly based on original documents, at least with regard to military intelligence. Considering the tight co-operation of Warsaw Pact secret services and the role of 'big brother' in the East as an infallible example, we may assume that those guidelines also applied to the HVA.

Drawing on selected documents from the USSR's military intelligence service (*Glavnoje Razvedyvatel'noje Upravlenije*, meaning Main Intelligence Directorate, GRU), this chapter examines the question of how military intelligence under Nikita Khrushchev drew up situation reports and analyses and to what degree the results were taken into account by the political decision makers in situations of crisis. I argue that under Khrushchev, GRU's professionalism was further increased, even though it was not directly involved in the major decisionmaking processes in the state and party anymore.

As the military intelligence service's archive is closed to research, this work has largely depended on material from the Central Committee's general department within the Russian State Archive for Contemporary History. This has made it possible to access GRU documents that are otherwise inaccessible. In places, the content of these secret service files proves to be highly intriguing. The same applies to a multitude of Russian publications on the issue. These, however, often lack an academic apparatus, leaving us groping in the dark, not knowing from which sources the authors have obtained their information.¹ The fact that historiography can gain new insights from them nevertheless is partly due to the circumstance that many

of their authors have either worked for the respective authorities themselves or maintained close contact with them.

Change in military intelligence after Stalin's death

Under Khrushchev, the secret services were soon to develop entirely new working methods. First of all, access to the most important political decisionmaking bodies of the heads of the intelligence services was limited even more than had been the case under his predecessor, Joseph Stalin. Whereas GRU leader, Semen P.Uriki, had reported to the dictator in person six times in 1937, and his successor, Lieutenant General Ivan I. reported to the general in person 13 times between 1942 and 1945, Khrushchev summoned the then head of the GRU, Army general Ivan A.Serov, to a talk only once—on 31 December 1959. The head of KGB foreign espionage, Lieutenant General Alexander M.Sakharovsky, was never summoned to report at all.

Under Stalin, the leaders of the political and military intelligence services still had direct access to the Communist Party's secretary general and thus to the highest decision-making body in the Soviet Union. Under Khrushchev, this direct connection did not exist anymore. Therefore, the secret services had been deprived of the possibility of directly exerting their personal influence on the highest level of decision making.

As a result, collecting the respective agents' and sources' information and presenting them to the political leadership without an extensive analysis became insufficient after Stalin's death. Under the new party leader, it became increasingly important for the secret services' leaders to present thorough reports of the prevailing political, economic, military or war-economic situation. These reports were supposed to help the Soviet leaders solve important political problems.

In order to enable them to fulfil this task, Khrushchev ordered a reorganization of the intelligence services. Immediately after Stalin's death, the newly established Main Directorate Intelligence within the Ministry for State Security, MGB, was dissolved and put under the Ministry of the Interior, and counter-intelligence as an original structural unit was excluded

from it.² The Committee for State Security (KGB) was set up in March 1954 and was formally affiliated to the Council of Ministers of the USSR. Here the foreign political intelligence was integrated into this new secret service as Chief Directorate I. This was due to the fact that the direct command and control of the secret service was not in the hands of the Soviet government, but rather the CPSU's Central Committee.³

Right after the KGB's founding, Gregory M. Malenkov, a member of the Central Committee, had complained about the 'low standards' of foreign intelligence.⁴ Therefore, the party leadership issued the decree on 'measures for the improvement of the intelligence work of the State Security organs abroad' on 30 June 1954. The intelligence service's major objective was henceforth the intensification of espionage against the main enemies, the US and England, as well as against 'those countries used by them in their fight against the Soviet Union, first of all Western Germany, France, Austria, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and Japan'.⁵

In order to achieve this, the PGU was supposed to expose 'the aggressive plans of the US, NATO and other states hostile towards the USSR that aim at preparing and unleashing a new war', to get hold of 'reliable intelligence, primarily in the shape of documents, on the foreign policy agendas as well as practical measures of the USA and England, the differences between them and other capitalist countries' and examine 'the domestic and economic situation of the leading capitalist countries, their trade and economic policies, the activities of international organisations and the USA's and England's plans of using these organisations against the USSR'.⁶

Although few original reports by the KGB's Chief Directorate I, which was responsible for political espionage, are available from the Khrushchev period, existing documents show that efforts made in order to improve the analysis of intelligence were met with great success. What is missing under Khrushchev's regime is the 'raw report' so typical of the Stalin era, in which the agent's report on the basis of source information was forwarded uncommented or the translated original text of acquired secret documents was merely quoted. It was soon replaced by summarising analyses trying to evaluate the acquired secret documents in a more differentiated way.

Good examples of this new type of report emerging under Khrushchev are the GRU-memoranda on the 'defence of a British army corps by application of nuclear weapons' and the 'general plan for the defence of the American continent (S-019)' of 31 December 1954. Whereas the first document gave a short report on the English conception of the operation of an army corps in a defensive position under the conditions of nuclear warfare, the latter was drawn up in a far more analytical manner.⁷

Military intelligence showed explicitly that, according to the American armed forces, '[t]he Soviet Union does not yet have a sufficient number of long-range bombers that would be able to perform nuclear strikes against the most important objects on the American continent at her disposal.'⁸

With that information given, Khrushchev's conclusion was obvious: what was needed was the further extension of strategic long-range aircraft and the development of Soviet-made intercontinental missiles in order to finally get the American continent into range for nuclear weapons. During the following years, among other things, military intelligence reports on developments of the US armaments industry and on situations of military crisis were handed down to them.⁹

All in all, the activities of Soviet intelligence in the run-up to the Second Berlin Crisis were impressive, even though today, exact numbers are only available for the effectiveness of political espionage. The intelligence service's leaders presented Khrushchev with 2,508 reports by the 800 PGU agents operating in 'capitalist countries' between March 1954 and July 1957 alone. In the Council of Ministers, first Malenkov and after his deprivation of power, Nikolai A. Bulganin, were the prime recipients, and received another 2,316.

The Central Committee's other members appear to have been excluded from this exclusive source to a large extent. Just 293 items of intelligence from 'capitalist states on political, economic and military issues' were distributed among this group of people by order of the Central Committee. Moreover, the KGB managed to monitor almost any diplomatic correspondence extensively. In the period mentioned, the secret service transmitted more than 64,500 telegrams of 'capitalist states' diplomatic

correspondence', comprised in 2,057 so-called 'blue folders' to the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers.¹⁰ According to the KGB's own assessment, they were able to 'inform the Central Committee and the Soviet government about some important plans and intentions of the capitalist powers' heads on international issues in good time' on the basis of this information.¹¹ It may be assumed that the GRU was its equal and also made important contributions to the information of the USSR's government on military and political issues.

This shows that the Soviet intelligence services were rendered even more professional under Khrushchev, even though they were not directly involved in important decision-making processes within the party and administration anymore. However, the habit of taking intelligence reports into account when making political decisions had its limits, as the Kremlin leaders did not always trust their secret service analysts. When, in 1958, another Soviet intelligence service, the Foreign Ministry's Information Committee, was finally dissolved, three of its agents, headed by Valentin M. Falin, moved to the Central Committee of the CPSU, forming the Department of Information. This analytical centre was supposed to provide party leaders with independent and impartial expert assessments on the basis of various pieces of intelligence. As the experts let Khrushchev know that his idea of turning West Berlin into a 'demilitarized free city' could not be put into practice and that such an attempt could lead to war in early 1959, the head of the party disbanded the newly established information department without further ado and transferred its employees back to the foreign ministry.¹² Just as had Stalin before him, Khrushchev showed his incapability of acknowledging realistic situation reports and analyses that were contrary to his intentions and to act accordingly in his policies at the beginning of the Second Berlin Crisis.

The Soviet intelligence services and Khrushchev's first Berlin ultimatum

Two days before Khrushchev unleashed the Berlin Crisis with his ultimatum of 27 November 1958, giving the Western powers six months to agree to withdraw from Berlin and make it a free, demilitarized city, military intelligence had again assured him that, according to their

information, the State Department supposedly intimated that the Western countries could live with the new situation provided that the transfer of rights from the Soviet Union to the GDR government would take place in a flexible manner, without the USA losing face.¹³

According to another GRU secret report, the population of Berlin ‘at large’ would also approve of Khrushchev’s plan of turning the city into a neutral unit. These two dossiers are likely to have strengthened the Soviet leader’s illusion that he could succeed in making the Western powers change the status quo of Berlin at the beginning of the conflict over the divided city.¹⁴

This proved to be a dangerous misjudgement which failed to be met with general approval, even with the leadership of military intelligence, as their head, Colonel General Mikhail A. Shalin, warned the Kremlin of implementing a lightheaded Berlin policy as late as 19 November 1958. In fact, England and France would consent to a withdrawal of their troops from West Berlin, whereas the US would resist it.¹⁵ Western diplomats also got the impression from personal talks with the Soviet leader ‘that Khrushchev dangerously misjudges [the] real situation’, believing ‘that it was unthinkable [...] that the West would fight over Berlin.’¹⁶

Shortly after these reports, the Soviet leader replaced military intelligence leaders and appointed Ivan Serov, former head of the KGB, as new head of the GRU.¹⁷ The reasons for this ‘degradation’ of the secret service boss who formally was transferred to the military intelligence organization in order to ‘strengthen leadership’ are manifold.¹⁸

Serov, obviously showing little regret for his former KGB career, quickly started to shape the GRU according to his own ideas and forced them to adopt more professional working methods. Secret service employees said at internal party meetings that ‘now we can actually do our work properly instead of copying tabloid news from foreign newspapers’.¹⁹ Thus, the GRU intensified their agents’ operations and at the same time tried to improve their conspiratorial work.

The defection of Piotr Popov—a GRU Lieutenant Colonel who had been working with a section of the Soviet forces in Germany and who had

identified more than 80 military intelligence officers and given the CIA hundreds of leads on the service's sources in the years between 1953 and 1959—had torn large gaps in the ranks of military intelligence. Obviously, Serov's endeavours were not in vain, as in early 1960 he was able to report to the party leadership that they had succeeded in 'obtaining documents and material which possess a high value for the country's defence and which have been reported to the CPSU Central Committee'.²⁰

On 30 September 1959, for instance, the GRU presented the Soviet leadership with memo number 119, which contained detailed data on NATO's military spending between 1949 and 1959. The background of this memorandum was obviously the increased armament efforts of NATO as a reaction to Khrushchev threatening the continuance of Allied presence in West Berlin. The GRU's intention was presumably to convince the Soviet premier to force the Soviet Union's own rearmament effort so that the self-provoked conflict over Berlin would not end in a defeat. Especially in the initial phase of the Berlin Crisis, Khrushchev had underestimated the military-strategic aspect of the dispute, trusting in the effect of his permanent threats of using the—actually nearly nonexistent—arsenal of nuclear missiles.²¹

The GRU disposed of high-profile sources in the Federal Republic of Germany as well. Among them was Edgar Feuchtinger, until his death in spring 1960. The former Wehrmacht general had been recruited by members of the GRU in Krefeld in 1953—however, he co-operated with them involuntarily. The GRU presented Feuchtinger with compromising material from the final days of the war, showing his reduction to the rank of private and his desertion. The former general mostly obtained files from the Federal Ministry of Defence which he could access via former colleagues, but also secret NATO records. In January 1960, he suffered a stroke during a meeting with his agent in command and died shortly after. By that time, Feuchtinger had delivered more than 1,000 pages of top-secret documents to Moscow.²²

Routine intelligence work

Everyday life in intelligence, however, was characterized by unspectacular routine secret service operations, especially such as order-of-battle intelligence, i.e. gathering information on the size, displacement, structure and movements of NATO forces in Europe, rather than by top spies. Therefore, the Soviet intelligence organizations and their allies needed a vast number of agents, as they lacked a sufficient number of technical devices, e.g. satellites and airborne reconnaissance. Due to the fact that they observed rather small parts of the overall NATO military activity by the surveillance of garrison strengths, infrastructure, activities on training areas, etc., they hardly provided any detail that would be spectacular in itself. Only the work of the analysis units put the newly won mosaic pieces into a puzzle that usually provided an accurate picture of the situation. With that, the Soviet side was able to react swiftly to any change of the military situation in Western Europe and around Berlin during the conflict over the divided city.²³ For example, the foreign ministry's directors transmitted a daily military situation report of Western Europe and Berlin based on GRU agents' information to the heads of the Central Committee from the time of the erection of the Berlin Wall to January 1962. During the confrontation at Check-point Charlie in October 1961, local GRU observers did not just report the exact number of airborne bombers as well as that of all Strategic Air Command bombers stationed in Europe, but also the precise number of US navy nuclear missile vessels operating in the Norwegian Sea or stationed at Holy Loch.²⁴ This might have contributed to Khrushchev's decision to end the showdown at the checkpoint by withdrawing his tanks.

A few numbers show the extent of these secret operations. In 1959 alone, 2,802 'hostile agents' were arrested in the Federal Republic of Germany, approximately 30 per cent of which had been put on military targets. In the first ten months of 1960, the US military counter-intelligence service arrested 348 persons who were spying on American military facilities in Europe, primarily in Western Germany. Of those detained, 266 worked for the MfS, 66 for Soviet services. Another 58 provided other secret services of the Warsaw Pact with information. Nearly 60 per cent of the operations were concerned with order-of-battle reconnaissance; 31 per cent of the agents were investigating units and their armament. Fourteen per cent monitored garrisons and other military facilities; another 13 per cent of the agents spied on troops armed with nuclear weapons and missiles and their

garrisons. Almost 20 per cent of the other reconnaissance operations were aimed at US counter-intelligence; another 10 per cent tried to find information on US army personnel in a targeted way; 5 per cent of the agents detained traced manoeuvres and alarms. The fact that almost one-third of the spies were arrested in the Western sectors of the divided city proves that Berlin was the focal point of Eastern espionage. With this background we should not be surprised that the US forces in Europe reckoned Soviet espionage assaults to be the ‘biggest immediate threat’ during the Berlin Crisis.^{[25](#)}

Most Soviet sources in West Germany were run via the GDR, where the KGB and GRU had numerous residencies at their disposal. Western intelligence estimated that Soviet military intelligence alone could revert to 400–600 intelligence agents in East Germany. About 250 of them were stationed with the staff of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG) at Wünsdorf; further locations existed in Erfurt, Schwerin, Leipzig and Magdeburg. The respective GSFG armies’ intelligence units were also assigned particular espionage targets within the framework of Soviet order-of-battle surveillance. The 20th guard division, which was stationed in Berlin, for instance ‘worked on’ allied facilities in West Berlin and furthermore observed West Berlin’s police force. At the same time, military intelligence could make use of the Soviet Military Liaison Missions in Frankfurt/Main and in Baden-Baden for their espionage activity.^{[26](#)}

The GRU’s political influence on the Kremlin during the construction of the Wall: possibilities and limits

Whereas I could hardly find any GRU reports from 1960, the number of documents transmitted to the CPSU Central Committee by the GRU that are accessible in the archive increases dramatically from 1961 onwards. In April 1961, the GRU provided the Central Committee with—among other things—a compilation of ‘war-economic measures of the BRD 1960’. The heads of the military intelligence service had prefixed the 19-page report with a two-and-a-half page summary of the secret dossier’s crucial points.^{[27](#)}

This report showed the members of the CPSU Central Committee that the arms race was quickening its pace. Khrushchev was further than ever from

general disarmament, which he still strived for in early 1960. The fact that the Western armament effort was not just limited to West Germany and had been gathering speed, especially after Kennedy had taken office, was also shown to the Kremlin leaders by other GRU information. On 5 June 1961, the service submitted a report to the Central Committee regarding the restructuring of the US Air Force's research and development centres. The aims of these measures were, according to the GRU, to speed up the development and construction of cosmic weapons, strategic missiles, missile defence systems and electronic air command and control systems. Obviously being dissatisfied with their own problems in missile development and the fear that the US lead would continue to grow, the head of the Central Committee's armaments commission, Dimitry F. Ustinov, immediately received a copy of the document by order of defence minister Malinovsky.²⁸ Unfortunately, it is impossible to track this event further, as the armaments commission's documents are still closed to research.

On 22 and 23 June 1961, the GRU submitted two extensive letters, written in an alarming tone, to the CPSU Central Committee informing about the further upgrading of the US Army's arsenal of tactical and tactical-operative nuclear missiles, as well as President Kennedy's plans to reinforce the US Army. The first report gave the Soviet leadership a detailed overview of the US land force's equipment with tactical nuclear missiles.

At the same time, the GRU report made it clear to the leaders in the Kremlin to what extent the nuclear balance of power in Europe had shifted within a short period of time. Whereas in 1958, the 12 divisions of a US land army stationed here had six batteries of tactical short-range missiles and 21 batteries of artillery that could launch nuclear ammunition, the same group had a unit of *Redstone* intermediate-range ballistic missiles, 21 batteries of tactical short-range missiles and 19 batteries of nuclear-armed artillery at their disposal. Furthermore, a battery of tactical nuclear missiles, model *Honest John*, per division was added. Although the bulk of the available missiles only had a range of up to 40 km and only the *Corporal* and the *Redstone* could be launched at targets at 130km and 320km, respectively, the impact on Soviet strategy was enormous. In the future, these would be boosted even further, because according to the GRU, the

Americans worked on the modernization and development of short- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles with great speed and effort.²⁹

The USSR land force's previous conventional superiority could now be broken down efficiently by the US Army's tactical nuclear weapons, which enabled the US forces in Europe to turn the bulk of the Soviet tank armies into radiating piles of scrap in case of a possible armed conflict. The Soviet Union attempted to counter the new situation by equipping more and more of their land forces with tactical nuclear weapons.³⁰ At the same time, it seems clear that the GRU wanted to call attention to the possible consequences of any armed conflict over Berlin. The document was supposed to explain to the decision makers in the Kremlin that the often-propagated superiority of the Soviet forces did not exist in reality and that a military confrontation with the Western allies bore considerable risks for the USSR. The Soviet Union would encounter a well-armed and well-prepared enemy.

Another GRU letter submitted to the Central Committee a day later demonstrated this also. Titled 'Analysis of the changed planning of the American forces' structure and of the US defence budget for 1961/62', it investigated Kennedy's suggestions for the further reinforcement of the US Army made in Congress on 28 March and on 25 May 1961. The military considered the announcement made by the US president to increase military spending by \$3.771 billion to be of particular importance. What was even more alarming to the Kremlin leaders was that Kennedy pressed further for a quick extension of the USA's strategic forces. Thus, 12 squadrons armed with intercontinental ballistic missiles of the types *Atlas* and *Titan* were supposed to be arrayed until the end of 1964. At the same time, the US president suggested accelerating the *Minuteman* project considerably and deploying 12 squadrons of the type at the beginning of 1965. The *Minuteman* proved to be a light, relatively cheap and precise intercontinental ballistic missile that could be launched from dugouts. The quick extension of the fleet of ballistic missile submarines represented an extremely tough strategic challenge too. Kennedy wanted to commission 29 *George Washington-class* nuclear submarines, armed with 16 Polaris missiles, each to be in service by the end of 1964, which would have given

the US an actual second strike capability for the first time—against which the Soviet Union had no efficient defence mechanisms.³¹

With that it was clear to the Soviet premier that his present strategic concept for an armed confrontation with the US had failed. Initially, Khrushchev had assumed that it was possible in the mid-1960s to keep the US in check with 150–200 intercontinental ballistic missiles. According to these plans, the USSR's strategic missile forces had five launching facilities for R-7, 172 for R-16 and 11 for R-9, at their disposal from 1964 onwards.³² However, this assumption was soon to be displaced by reality. With the *Minuteman* programme initiated under Kennedy, the US began with the deployment of relatively cheap solid-fuel rockets on a huge scale.

These were, thanks to their high accuracy, able to eliminate the relatively few and unprotected Soviet nuclear missile bases as well as the Soviet strategic bomber bases in a first strike. The Soviet Union now faced its own 'missile gap'. While the ratio of Soviet and American missiles that could reach the other state's territory had still been at 1:3 in 1961, it was at 1:5.5 in 1964.³³

The GRU reports made it clear to Khrushchev that the strategic balance was quickly shifting to the disadvantage of the Soviet Union. The time remaining for the denouncement of the Berlin crisis that he had in mind got shorter and shorter, so that in July 1961, he decided to solve the problem for the time being by sealing off the Western part of the city.³⁴ The exact knowledge of the Western Allies' plans for any armed conflict over Berlin, as well as the political and economic measures they intended to implement in the case of war, encouraged the operation's completion. For this, again, the GRU played an important role.

One secret service report proved particularly valuable for the critical phase just before and during the construction of the Berlin Wall. On 25 August 1961, Malinovsky, the minister of defence, informed Khrushchev about the most important results of the conference based on GRU information. He, however, filed the document in the archive with his personal secretary's comment that the KGB had already transmitted the information to the premier and party chairman earlier.³⁵ The details about the foreign

ministers' meeting in Paris proved highly intriguing as they gave the Soviet leadership an insight into strictly confidential co-ordination mechanisms between the Western Allies and the Federal Republic of Germany. Once again, the extensive Western military preparations during the intensification of the conflict over Berlin were shown to the Soviet leaders. The objective of these measures was, according to the GRU analysts, to 'firmly show the West's readiness for military clashes'.³⁶ Moreover, this was an absolute precondition for negotiations with the USSR, showing that their threats would meet military resistance should the talks fail.

On the basis of this information, Khrushchev knew that any additional aggravation of the crisis in Berlin held the incalculable danger that a military conflict with the Western powers could erupt. Therefore, he ordered his forces not to aggravate the situation by taking further steps after the borders in Berlin had been blocked.

Super agents

The Soviet military leaders were confirmed in their cautious policy by additional secret GRU information from NATO headquarters in Paris. Here, Captain 1st Rank Victor A. Lubimov handled a source codenamed 'Murat'. It remains unknown exactly who he was. All that is certain is that the agent who was born in 1916 and assumed the rank of Air Force Brigadier General in the end had supplied Moscow with highly charged information since 1959. Among these were details on the movement of US units to Berlin and the tank showdown at Check-point Charlie. However, the NATO documents 'Murat' submitted to his employers in Moscow were far more important. Already in 1958/1959 he had submitted to the GRU the 'Joint Atomic Plan No. 81/58', as well as the 'SACEUR's Atomic Strike Plan No. 110/59', alongside the 52-page order for the 2nd ATAT's 'Full Play' manoeuvre, which took place 3–5 June 1958. These topsecret NATO key documents informed the Soviet Army of the Western military alliance's nuclear-target planning for the outbreak of war and information on how and with what nuclear weapons, and which military, political and economic targets on Warsaw Pact territory should be attacked. In 1960 the CENTAG defence plans were handed over. It was followed by other strictly confidential NATO operation and guidance documents, such as the NATO operative air

defence plan and important materials on the alliance's strategy in the Berlin Crisis of 1961.

'Murat' was awarded the Order of Lenin for his espionage work by the Soviet government in 1962. The agent, who was now working for the 17th Air Force's staff at Rammstein, returned the favour by providing, among other things, a list containing 1,093 NATO nuclear missile targets and another 25 microfilm reels of secret documents. In 1963, 'Murat' moved on to the NATO headquarters near Paris (SHAPE). Between 1963 and 1965, he delivered to Soviet military intelligence 40 documents the evaluation department classified as particularly important and 140 rated as important. Among others were the 'Joint Atomic Plan No. 200/63', the 'NATO Nuclear Weapons Employment Handbook', as well as information on the NATO Army Armaments Group (AC/225), Ad hoc Mixed Working Group on Battle Tank (AC/174), Ad hoc Mixed Working Group on Infra-red Sensors (AC/185) and on the deployment of Pershing missiles in Western Europe. At the end of 1965, 'Murat' was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, but at the same time dispensed from his work at SHAPE and transferred to the reserves. With that, his previous access to secret information petered out. The agent, who loved fast sports cars, died in a car crash in the summer of 1968.^{[37](#)}

However, information on NATO's nuclear weapons from other sources still reached Moscow. Between 20 February 1963 and 30 January 1964, agent *Guron* (Warrant Officer: Joseph G. Helmich), who was also handled by Lyubimov, provided the GRU with approximately 200 documents on the deployment and storage of US nuclear weapons in Europe. Helmich, who was born in 1936, had served in the US Army since 1954. In 1958, the intelligence soldier obtained access to top-secret classified documents and was transferred to the 275th Signal Company at the NATO headquarters near Paris a year later. Having found himself in financial difficulty, Helmich contacted the GRU residency there and started to sell secret and coded material in January 1963. In the spring of 1963, he was transferred to Ford Bragg, where he continued his undercover work. In a single meeting in Paris, the agent gave Victor Lyubimov, his case officer, 67 microfilms of secret documents. In November 1963, 'Guron' provided daily and monthly codes valid until February 1964, which were used in strategically important

bases, e.g. in Washington, Norfolk, Ford Bragg, Heidelberg (USAREUR headquarters), as well as West Berlin. In a letter to First Secretary Khrushchev, the GRU leaders assessed that the material obtained by Helmich made it possible to 'gain and confirm some particularly important details on preparations of US and NATO forces for the application of nuclear missile devices on the European theatre' in early 1964.³⁸ In July 1964, Helmich found himself in the FBI's view after a meeting with a GRU agent in Mexico City. Shortly after that, he was transferred to Vietnam for a year and after his return to the US, he no longer gained access to secret material. The connection to the GRU broke off and he was removed from the military intelligence's spy ring in 1967. By that time, the GRU spy had delivered more than 3,500 pages of documents, 650 coded telegrams, about 500 day codes and ten rolls of punched paper from the KL-7 rotor machine encryption system. Another attempt to establish contacts with the GRU brought Helmich into the US counter-intelligence's focus again in January 1981. In July 1981, 'Guron' was arrested and was sentenced to life imprisonment.³⁹

At the same time, we have to note that besides considerable successes, Soviet military intelligence also had to put up with some setbacks. The most prominent of these is probably the case of Oleg Penkovsky. The GRU colonel provided the CIA and MI6 with his private knowledge of Soviet military intelligence as a so-called 'walk-in' since 1960. In 1961, the intelligence officer drew attention to some definite weak points in the Soviet military and proved that the Soviet Union hardly had any intercontinental ballistic missiles on standby, using internal sources for the first time at several secret meetings in London and Paris. At the same time, Penkovsky handed over several issues of the top-secret edition of the magazine *Voennaya misl*, which was exclusively intended for high-ranking general staff officers and army commanders, and gave Western analysts an extensive knowledge of the new Soviet military strategy. It is rather doubtful, however, if Penkovsky, who was arrested on 2 November 1962, 'saved the world', as a book title claims, because the colonel had been suspected of espionage and observed by the KGB since the winter of 1961. Perhaps he even served as a channel through which the West received Soviet disinformation.⁴⁰ In Moscow, however, the arrest of Penkovsky evoked a political earthquake. GRU boss Serov was replaced and demoted

to the rank of major general and stripped of his order, 'Hero of the Soviet Union'. The fired secret service boss had to register at his new post as instructor in Tbilisi within 24 hours.⁴¹

In 1961, Dimitry F. Polyakov, alias source 'TOPHAT', a New York-based GRU officer, offered the FBI his services as a 'walk-in'. After his return to the GRU central in Moscow in 1962, he was taken over by the CIA who could probably call him their best asset. Until he was arrested in late 1986, Polyakov, who assumed the rank of major general in the end, supplied the CIA with extensive information from the heart of Soviet military intelligence, filling more than 25 files. Moreover, the agent delivered more than 100 secret issues of the military magazine *Voennaya misl*. Polyakov was sentenced to death by a military tribunal and executed on 15 March 1988.⁴²

Conclusion

Western political and military measures during the Berlin Crisis were to a high degree transparent to the Soviet leadership because of GRU information. Military intelligence gave Khrushchev an insight into almost all decisions of the Western powers up to the highest government levels. Knowledge gained through espionage had a high value for his Berlin policy. It made the Soviet head of state and party leader aware of how far he could go with his bluff in the poker game for Berlin. The 'pragmatic, clear-headed orientation of KGB and GRU' made the 'passionate and slightly foolhardy' Khrushchev shy away from any adventurous decisions at the climax of the crisis and realistically assess the situation. This led to the withdrawal of the tanks at Checkpoint Charlie and later in the Cuban Missile Crisis to the withdrawal of the Soviet missiles from the island.⁴³ However, the fact that Khrushchev made mistakes and misjudgements in his Berlin policy in spite of the concise secret service information is indisputable. Ideological motives dominated his political agenda. Consequently, the secret service agents with their analytical situation reports could not always get their way against the Kremlin leader's own convictions.

Notes

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Michail Boltunov, *Agenturoj GRU ustanovleno*, Moscow: Russkaja razvedka, 2003.

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10 Letter from Serov to Chruščev on KGB documents sent to instances, 22 July 1957, in *Lubjanka 1917–1991*, pp. 687–688.

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BND military espionage in East Germany, 1946–1994

Armin Wagner

In the middle of the 1960s, the British Secret Service learned from an East German refugee that missiles were being stored or assembled in the town of Kalkstadt, south of Rostock in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania: “whatever they had in the sheds could blow the Americans out of West Germany in a couple of hours.” The attempt to fly over the area and take pictures from a fully occupied commercial aircraft that allegedly had gone off-course was not successful, and photo-optical reconnaissance was not available.

Consequently, the Service decided to send an agent across the East-West German border near Lübeck to Kalkstadt. They chose Fred Leiser, a man with a migrant background and experience, who owned a small garage in London. He was born in Danzig, Poland. He spoke very good German and had already worked for the British Secret Service during World War II. However, this time, shortly after the Berlin Wall had been built, his mission failed. Leiser killed an East German border guard, made major mistakes while operating the radio and finally fell into the hands of his enemies.

Many aspects of this scenario are incorrect: civil planes, as known today, were rarely used for optical reconnaissance. Fred Leiser’s mission, “a crash operation at the border” which meant smuggling a Western agent into the German Democratic Republic (GDR), “[had] scarcely been done since the war.” In the 1950s and 1960s the Western intelligence service preferred East German human intelligence (HUMINT) instead of sending their own agents. The town of Kalkstadt cannot be found on an East German map because the town as well as Fred Leiser and the entire operation are mere fiction. The people and the plot had sprung from John le Carré’s imagination, who understood that his book *The Looking Glass War* would be seen as more speculative when he made one of his characters state about the airplane: “We don’t normally use the routine couriers for operational work, but this was different; something very special indeed.”¹ Nevertheless,

le Carré's spy novel reflects a realistic dimension of the East-West confrontation during the Cold War. The author's fiction deals with the assessment of the then security situation by contemporary Western specialists: especially the potential danger originating from the Soviet military, which stood with core fighting power in East Germany, and the espionage against them. Since the Berlin Blockade in 1948–1949 and the Korean War of 1950–1953, such military intelligence gathering was common. The war in the Far East had made it clear: the Cold War could become explosive at any time. This war proved the need for information about the military enemy and confirmed the reconnaissance priorities against Moscow's military in East Germany (close reconnaissance), as well as in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the other countries of the Eastern Bloc, including Yugoslavia and Albania, in addition to intelligence gathering in the USSR (distant reconnaissance).²

In the face of the threat from the Kremlin to their own political and geographic positions, the British chiefs of staff realized in 1950 that there could not be a British-only or Western European-only strategy in an isolated and independent form; full cooperation with the United States “in policy and method” would be necessary.³ This was not limited to the “special relationship” between Washington and London nor to the armed forces. The British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and other US services, the French and Danish Intelligence Services, the US armed forces in Europe, as well as NATO and the West German Federal Intelligence Service (*Bundesnachrichtendienst*—BND) operated together in their investigations against the Soviet troops and shared their results at least in part with the other partners.

Against the backdrop of a permanent military threat, the result of this work presented itself primarily in the so-called *order-of-battle-intelligence*, which analyzed the capabilities and intentions of the Eastern military. Especially in the 1950s and 1960s, the main interest was directed not at the East German Army and paramilitary organizations but at the Soviet Occupying Forces in Germany (GSOFG/GBST, 1945–1954) and the (renamed) Group of Soviet Forces in Germany (GSFG/GSSD, 1954–1989).⁴

From the end of World War II to the beginning of the 1960s the appearance and mission of the Soviet troops in the Soviet Occupation Zone and the GDR changed crucially. The partly poorly equipped and largely stationary occupying forces had developed into a highly mobile, offensive, decisive and powerful armed forces group which had taken over a key position in the implementation of Soviet military and security interests against Western Europe. The GSFG/ GSSD had not only, like the early GSOFG/GSBT, to protect the Soviet position in the GDR as well as the retention of power of the SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*—Socialist Unity Party of Germany). They also had the order to be an active military deterrent against NATO and especially against the Federal Republic. At the end of the 1960s, according to an estimate of the BND, the GSFG/GSSD together with the Warsaw Pact troops were capable of being the first squadron forming an attack from a standing position without any mobilization preparations. In a “Strategic Attack Operation” they were also capable of transferring acts of war over the western areas through the Federal Republic, reaching the French, Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic coast as well as the Spanish and French Mediterranean within 20 days.

Historicizing the BND story

Among the intelligence agencies in the Federal Republic of Germany, the BND has the exclusive right to conduct foreign intelligence. Its predecessor, the so-called “Gehlen Organization,” which was structured under the custody of the US Army, had this right since 1946. The Military Counter-Intelligence Service (*Militärischer Abschirmdienst*—MAD) as the intelligence service of the armed forces was never entitled to their own military espionage. German political, military, economic, scientific and technological intelligence had always been centralized. The frequent rivalry between different but competent institutions, as is the case today in the United States, was avoided. Even the G2/A2 service of the Federal Armed Forces, which is responsible for the evaluation of the adversarial military situation, had no active espionage. But G2/A2 benefited from the knowledge of those specialized electronic warfare divisions that intercepted the radio communications of the Warsaw Pact troops.⁵ Before the building of the Berlin Wall, “no other Western intelligence agency had better preconditions for espionage in the GDR than the BND,” said one of the

heads of division, who worked in Pullach since the 1950s.⁶ However, the historical sources concerning this internal development of the Gehlen Organization and BND are still few. Because of the lack of relevant documents a concise administrative history of the BND has not been possible yet.⁷ The same applies for a well-investigated social history, as already exists for the East German opponent of the BND, the Ministry of State Security (*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*—MfS).⁸

A currently more promising direction for research about the BND is, therefore, to focus on its core business as a secret service, which cannot be a narrative about *top spies* and *great spy-catchers* that hardly reflects reality. It is rather a narrative about the everyday experience of functional targeted intelligence activities. Research on the MfS espionage and its Main Intelligence Administration (*Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*—HVA) has produced such results.⁹ The files that were given to the Federal Archive in Koblenz by the BND several years ago not only describe military reconnaissance and analysis. They also document results of economic espionage and the questioning of emigrants who left the Eastern Bloc after the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968.¹⁰ However, these resources have hardly been used and not systematically evaluated until now. The same applies for the files from the Chancellor's office, which relate to general official matters of the BND and the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (*Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*).¹¹ BND operations in the GDR have only recently received archive-based attention.¹²

The BND files handled in Koblenz account for the success of West German military espionage in the late 1940s and the 1950s: in contrast to the US services, Pullach did not begin its military espionage from scratch in the Eastern Bloc in 1946. The German service had abundant prior knowledge from the World War II era that they could fall back on, and which was constantly updated in the 1950s and 1960s. In a series of approximately 26,000 record cards handed over from the *Wehrmacht* Army's General Staff Division Foreign Forces East (*Fremde Heere Ost*—FHO), information about the Red Army had been collected. Those files survived the end of the war along with other materials from the FHO. The last entries are not from

1945 but rather 1965, which shows that it was still being used as a military analyzing tool until long after the war.

Additionally, there is a collection of field post numbers comprising 15,000 record cards that cover the years 1940–1969. These cards were used for the registration of Soviet units during the war and later in the Soviet Occupation Zone and in the GDR. Moreover, the same file was used for the Soviet-occupied part of Austria up to 1955, for the Soviet military districts Baltic, Belarus, Kiev, the Carpathians, Moscow, Transbaikal-Amur, Turkistan, the Northern Caucasus and the Far East. Another important serial source is the so-called “Garrison Files GDR” (*Standortkartei DDR*) that cover the territory of the GDR.¹³ Thousands of those files document the efforts of the West German foreign intelligence service to systematically monitor more than 480 objects of the Soviet Armed Forces in the GDR from the beginning of the 1950s to the early 1970s. In addition to this *finished intelligence* one can find the monthly and weekly reports on the political and military analysis of the Warsaw Pact countries among the accessible BND documents. This so-called “finished intelligence” is subject to a 30-year blocking period.

In addition to the material that was handed over from the FHO, the success of the Gehlen Organization and the BND was based on the relations between traditionally linked connections with fellow Germans in the then Soviet-occupied areas. In contrast to the other Western services, their staff had extensive personal contacts behind the Iron Curtain. They spoke the same language and understood the culture, mentality and lifestyle of their compatriots. The motives for East German citizens, who supported the BND, were diverse and sometimes quite contradictory in nature: anti-Bolshevik convictions mixed with residual nationalsocialist ideology subjected to espionage as well as general democratic beliefs. Even personal loyalty from the *Wehrmacht* times between West German agents and East German sources, the search for relatives, desires for migration to the West or adventure, as well as financial distress or greed made people act against Moscow’s troops.

Therefore, a culture of continuity and accumulation informed the acquisition of knowledge of West German espionage. Former *Wehrmacht*

Major-General Reinhard Gehlen became head of the service. Whereas the holdings of the FHO, that covered the years 1942 to 1945, made up the essential material foundation of the young West German intelligence service, it was Gehlen who embodied the continuity of German espionage against the Soviet Union carried out by the organization that was named after him. In 1956 this organization—now named BND—broke away from American control and integrated into the West German administration. Gehlen remained the President of the BND for another 12 years.¹⁴

Reconnaissance objective: Red Army

In the late 1940s and in the 1950s, military espionage was the main focus of the Gehlen Organization and the BND. However, the West Germans lacked the capabilities of photo-optical intelligence. Pullach (as the central location of the service in the south of Munich became a synonym for the BND, like Langley for the American CIA or the Lubyanka for the Soviet KGB (*Komitet Gosudarstvennoj Bezopasnosti*)) therefore fell back on radio and electronic reconnaissance (signals intelligence—SIGINT) and its human-source reservoir. During the Berlin Blockade the US Air Force in Europe relied on practically every bit of information which the Gehlen Organization delivered about the Soviet 16th Air Army stationed in East Germany. Gehlen's radio reconnaissance was capable of capturing the radio communications of the Soviet pilots and it was

the single intelligence operation in the past few years that [had] been able to give the US Air Forces in Europe a timely and accurate picture of the activities of Soviet Air Forces which [were] in a position to take immediate tactical action in Western Europe.¹⁵

By 1950, Gehlen's experts could spy on the broadcasts of all Soviet early-warning radar stations on GDR territory.¹⁶ According to James Critchfield—who had been sent as Gehlen's chief advisor to the Pullach headquarters in 1948—the Korean War enhanced the reputation of the Gehlen Organization with the CIA.¹⁷

In the middle of June 1953, some of the East German population spontaneously rose up against the SED dictatorship. The regime could only

hold onto power because Moscow deployed its occupying armed forces to ruthlessly defeat the uprising as it began; afterwards, it became clear that the East German police, military and security apparatus were totally unable to cope with the situation and the collapse of Walter Ulbricht's rule seemed close.

The Berlin Blockade had been the first crisis, 17 June 1953 was the second test for the Gehlen Organization and its informants, during which—like all crises - the strengths and weaknesses of the service were revealed. Whereas in 1948– 1949 the SIGINT monitoring of the Soviet Air Force was of major significance, East German HUMINT sources were used in 1953. In the middle of that year news about strikes in the area of the Mansfelder Land as well as Henningsdorf reached Pullach. On 16 June, around 8 p.m., 15 minutes after the first broadcasts of the *Bayerische Rundfunk*, the first reports about demonstrations in East Berlin reached the Pullach headquarters from their own sources. As the majority of the employees had already finished their working day, important decisions were delayed; the organization finally began to wake up in the afternoon of the next day. The chance that the intelligence service could have learned something about the demonstration in advance was close to zero, because the uprising of 17 June was a spontaneous event that surprised even the Socialist leaders in Berlin and Moscow. Between 17 June and 5 July Pullach mobilized at least 548 sources in the GDR that produced almost 1,300 reports. Concerning the actions of the Soviet Ground Forces alone, 320 reports were handed over by Pullach's spies.¹⁸ With the benefit of hindsight the analysts of the Gehlen Organization succeeded in gaining extensive knowledge about the uprising. That was very important for the future: among other things, it showed that in the event of a blockade of West Berlin a reliable radio network had to be expanded. Thus, the Gehlen Organization and its successor prepared and focused on the threat as a possible severing of the link between the intelligence officer and the operative since 1953. So they prepared for the lockdown of West Berlin—the fulcrum and central point of all intelligence operations against the GDR and the Soviet troops stationed there. After the dramatic escalation in the summer of 1953, the Gehlen Organization was still in a position to comprehensively monitor the GSOFG/GSBT and GSFG/GSSD garrisons as it had done with the help of a large number of informants in previous years. From 1951 this is definitively ascertainable by

the “Garrison files GDR.” Despite the serious setbacks in the middle of the 1950s,¹⁹ the service succeeded in operating from Rostock to Suhl and from Mühlhausen to Frankfurt/Oder until about 1963/1964.²⁰ The main focus of BND was directed at the garrisons on regimental level. The intensive monitoring of this spine of the troop structure made it possible to promptly detect a detailed and complete picture of the strength, dislocation, equipment and condition of the Soviet Army in the GDR. Just as important as the reconnaissance of the garrisons in the 1950s was the surveillance of the traffic system, especially the monitoring of the East German railway line, which was an “impeccable barometer of the Russian troop movements.”²¹ Military transports were assumed as valid indicators of an impending deployment of GSOFG/GSBT and GSFG/GSSD. With the reconnaissance of the infrastructure, the military experts were able to determine the adversaries’ change from peace to war at a very early stage.

Based on this information, Pullach produced qualified and sound reports for the political decision makers in Bonn. In 1960, for example, the BND analysis registered the deployment of two heavy tank divisions within the GSFG/GSSD, as well as the intensified equipping of these with operative tactical nuclear missiles. Nor did the analysts miss the intensity of the flight training and the number of flight hours (120) per pilot in this year.²² In 1958/1959 the BND sources gained knowledge of the deployment of Soviet medium-range missiles, type SS-3 “Shyster.” Because Pullach’s analysts deemed this knowledge particularly valid it was passed along to the Americans as an enormous success in April 1959.²³ The annual report of 1962 again describes fastidiously and at a very high intelligence level the armed forces of the Warsaw Pact, which demonstrates that this information channel did not become weaker soon after the Berlin Wall was built.²⁴

The Felfe Case, the building of the Berlin Wall and BND sources inside the GDR

The unmasking of the Soviet spy Heinz Felfe in 1961 had quite obviously a demoralizing effect on the BND, which dampened initiative and willingness to attempt risky intelligence operations against the Warsaw Pact. Felfe, a former officer in the Reich Security Head Office

(*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*—RSHA), had been able to work for the Soviet KGB for more than a decade. As head of the department “Counterintelligence Soviet Union” he had been centrally positioned within the BND up to his arrest. His extreme betrayal also destroyed the trust of the Western partner services in the BND. When in 1970, Richard Meier, former head of the counterintelligence department in the *Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz*, took over the intelligence branch of BND, he found a foreign-intelligence service which appeared to him “poorly oriented” and that had “only a few real secret sources in foreign countries,” as he described it in his memoirs.²⁵

Despite this mental shock reaction and self-blockade of Pullach’s spies, the capture of Felfe had no immediate measurable influence on the volume of the *order-of-battle-intelligence*. The middle- and long-term effects of the building of the Berlin Wall turned out to be the bigger challenge for the BND and their dense East German network of sources. The service was well-prepared for the division of Berlin because they had anticipated this sanction early enough.²⁶ After a short interruption, the contacts between the BND agents and the GDR sources were soon re-established after 13 August 1961, for example, in the garrison town of Bernau near Berlin. However, the source net for garrison monitoring and the amount of messages did not continue to exist as intact as it had before. For the years 1963 and 1964 the number of reports declined by approximately 50 percent. But the dramatic drop in intelligence gathering because of arrests (by the MfS) or “turn offs” (by the BND) of East German informants, who either had direct access to Soviet military sites or of the East German observers, who monitored these sites from outside, did not happen in Bernau before 1965.²⁷ By the early 1970s the network of old sources of GDR citizens was aging and worn down; still incoming intelligence news about barracks and troops in the town

[Table 13.1 Number of BND reports on the Air Signl Corps barracks in Bernau, 1962–1973](#)

had their roots, for example, in reports of the Western-allied Military Liaison Missions in East Germany,²⁸ of travelers or of single refugees.

At the beginning of the 1960s the MfS had already intensified its search for West German spies with the help of postal surveillance. A precondition for this measure was not only the building of the Berlin Wall but also the introduction of zip codes in West Germany in 1961. East German counterintelligence soon noticed the so-called “concentration areas” of cover addresses. These were a limited number of zip-code areas—first in Bavaria and later in Baden Wurttemberg and Lower Saxony—to which reports from old GDR sources were sent. The East German spies added their encrypted information to seemingly harmless letters which had been pre-written by the BND. Consequently, Counter-Intelligence Department II (*Hauptabteilung II*—HA II) of the MfS created a central database which enabled handwriting specialists to connect the ostensibly harmless letters to certain writers.²⁹ Pullach obviously underestimated the scientific precision of the East German counterintelligence in this respect.

By the second half of the 1960s, Pullach was pressured to change its methods and to build up a new HUMINT personnel stock. The BND now increasingly used transit and travel spies.³⁰ The first were West German and West Berlin citizens who used car and train transit routes through the GDR to West Berlin and back. However, the travel spies who visited relatives and friends in the GDR turned out to be more efficient. Pretending that he was visiting relatives, the West German Karl Barthels spied out a Soviet base in Ludwigslust (in Mecklenburg) approximately 110 times between 1963 and 1973. He was finally captured after having delivered information to the BND for ten years. This new form of military espionage against Soviet garrisons led to much more cursory reports compared to the information that was gathered by sources who had been recruited from the pool of Germans (for instance, caretakers, electricians or cleaning personnel) who worked for the GSFG/GSSD and had at least partial access to the Soviet facilities. On the other hand, the risky problem of unmasking the postal or radio connections did not exist because the sources only contacted their supervising officers at headquarters after they had left the GDR.

In the 1970s and 1980s MfS counterintelligence, like other big parts of the “Mielke Trust,” was under pressure because of the political opening of the GDR to the international community. In the quest for worldwide recognition, Honecker’s GDR had to consider human rights after signing

the Basic Treaty (*Grundlagenvertrag*) with Bonn (1972), the admission to the United Nations (1973) and the CSCE Treaty (1975).³¹ The fight against BND espionage demanded justifiable results to be able to present the resulting trials as constitutional to the international public. What would not have been a problem for the MfS interrogation specialists in the 1950s with their Stalinist methods was much more difficult under the new conditions because the traveling BND sources did not carry any intelligence evidence with them: “We have to know, that what the spy finds out, he carries it in his head over the border into the operation area,” noted the counterintelligence branch which was, from here on, fixated on such clear evidence.³² The new political parameters led to such an enormous increase of jobs that the responsible section HA II of the MfS, which had grown from only 156 to 216 employees between 1954 and 1970, expanded to 1,180 employees by 1981.³³

Just as West German espionage delivered many single, and often unspectacular, pieces of the big mosaic to headquarters in Pullach, so too was East German defensive measures against the BND spies, who infiltrated the big stream of West German travelers after 1970, small-piece puzzle work. Part of the activity of the MfS was, among other things, a concentrated action against transit spies. The Ministry of State Security intensively monitored the travel activities of these *Zugvögel* (“Birds of Passage”), as they were labeled by MfS jargon. In the longterm operation *Angriff* (“Attack”) in the 1970s, 40 of about 75 identified spies were caught systematically. Only in 1977, 14 BND people were caught in the net of the MfS, most of them transit spies. State Security could regard their detentions as a success; and the personal destiny of those sentenced to long-term imprisonment underscores the MfS’ coup. However, even East Berlin had to notice that some BND sources had worked for a very long time without being discovered. In the following decade, between 1977 and 1986, 23 percent of captured spies had worked at least five to ten years and 15 percent even longer than ten years for Pullach.³⁴ Although operation “Attack” tied many of the MfS troops it did not lead to success because military intelligence in the BND could not permanently be neutralized.

Intelligence service strategies in the 1970s and 1980s

In 1966 the Social Democrats stepped, for the first time, from opposition into a big coalition with the dominant Christian Democrats. From 1969 the SPD was the stronger of the two government parties in a coalition with the Liberals. This changeover of power also led to changes and new orientations in Pullach. The infrastructure of the service was especially affected: Reinhard Gehlen was pensioned off; the service became more academic and professional, and the so-called “SPD membership book politics” was directed against the old conservative clique. Even though West German Armed Forces Lieutenant-General Gerhard Wessel—a war-experienced intelligence officer, who had previously been Gehlen’s subordinate at *Fremde Heere Ost*—became head of the BND, the old FHO spirit was driven out step by step.³⁵

Bonn’s interest in information about the GDR shifted. Federal Chancellery Minister, Horst Ehmke, demanded a higher level of information about the political East Berlin. However, de facto *order-of-battle-intelligence* was still zealously conducted behind the Iron Curtain. Richard Meier, the aforementioned former high-ranking officer at the *Verfassungsschutz* and the new BND head of intelligence department, proved to be the virtual driving force behind the new intelligence offensive. Under his command from 1970 to 1975 a new clientele was approached by the BND that seemed capable of military espionage: these were “people with a high freedom of movement within the GDR,”³⁶ especially lorry drivers regardless of East or West German background, as well as employees of the East German State Railway and West German bargemen. This recruiting practice was continued and extended during the presidency of the later Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, who was the first civilian head of the West German intelligence service in the years 1979 to 1982.

In the middle of the 1980s, according to MfS data, 72 percent of the BND spies that were recruited had a professional background that was related to cross-border freight traffic. Additionally, the BND approached retired people and disability pensioners who were allowed to travel to the West as well as so-called “*Reisekader*” economic or scientific specialists with permission to travel to the West. By doing so, the BND deliberately took the risk of hiring double agents. While the MfS saw the chance of gaining information about the operational methods of the BND, the West German

Intelligence Service expected an output of useful and applicable information despite the mentioned risks. Additionally, the BND operated in close partnership with other services, especially with the US side. Steady sources were the Western Military Liaison Missions inside the GDR that partly shared their intelligence collection with Pullach.

When career diplomat Hans-Georg Wieck (1985–1990) took over the presidential chair, the BND intensified but also modified this approach: the MfS noticed that the BND was now increasingly concentrating on recruiting internal sources within the National People's Army (NVA), the State security itself, the East German border troops and customs authorities. At the same time they reduced their massive recruitment of traveling "outside" sources.³⁷ Every year the MfS was able to detect approximately 40 recruiting attempts aimed at GDR citizens working for the state or its security apparatus. Of these attempts, 50 percent could be traced back to the BND.³⁸ Pullach's success concerning these attempts is debatable today. However, since the service never stopped relying on espionage by travelers they continuously collected intelligence information, which NATO required for their early-warning system.

In the 1970s and in the beginning of the 1980s the GSFG/GSSD further increased their nuclear and conventional combat strength. This was especially aimed at the improvement of their offensive capacities, for example, by the deployment of an airborne brigade and the induction of more combat helicopters. At the climax of the NATO Double-Track Decision and the West German armament debate the GSFG/GSSD had more than 400,000 troops that were armed with around 7,000 tanks, 10,000 armored vehicles, 5,000 artillery guns, 700 tactical aircraft, 350 helicopters and 220 surface-to-surface missiles. The intelligence interest of the Western intelligence services was aimed at the Soviet deployment of new heavy equipment such as tanks, model T-72 and T-80, modern tactical MIG-25, -27 and -29 aircraft, combat helicopters, as well as surface-to-surface, anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles. Furthermore, they tried to collect information about the modernization of already-deployed automatic fire-control systems, radar technology and telecommunications. In the first half of the 1980s the MfS noticed reconnaissance attacks of the BND and American intelligence services on about one-quarter of all military sites of

the GSFG/ GSSD and the NVA. The main focus of Western intelligence lay on the territory south of the Magdeburg-Berlin line and west of the line Berlin-Leipzig-Chemnitz (former Karl-Marx-Stadt). But also in the six northern districts (Rostock, Schwerin, Neubrandenburg, Magdeburg, Frankfurt/Oder and Potsdam) there were 226 important Soviet military sites. State Security noticed intelligence attacks on 104 of them in the period from 1977 to 1982.³⁹ While the outcome of their political espionage was rather limited, the Western services were quite successful in spying on military targets in East Germany even without being able to fall back on well-positioned internal sources. In the course of Mikhail Gorbachev's reformist politics of Glasnost and Perestroika, the GSFG/GSSD was realigned as a more defensive force regarding strength, structure and equipment. This process was also symbolized by the renaming of GSFG/GSSD to Western Group of Forces in 1989. At the end of 1988, the Soviet party leader announced the withdrawal of two tank divisions and further units of clear offensive character from East Germany. While this fallback was still going on, the GDR ceased to exist and the deployment of Soviet troops between the Elbe and the Oder rivers was no longer justifiable. By the summer of 1994, the Western Group of Forces had completely left reunified Germany. Only then did the BND stop monitoring Soviet troops.⁴⁰

Signals intelligence

The BND documents at the Federal Archive in Koblenz, which are now declassified, provide only indirect information about signals intelligence against the Soviet military. The situation reports issued by the BND included information which was gained by SIGINT. These types of sources are also recognizable in the "Garrison Files." Raw intelligence concerning this domain is currently not available for public use, and could probably be analyzed only by technical specialists. However, the unpublished account by Leo Hepp offers a substitute record about the structure of technological reconnaissance since the second half of the 1940s. Leo Hepp (1907–1987), who had been acquainted with Gehlen since their time in the *Reichswehr* in 1933/1934, was the head of signals intelligence within the Gehlen Organization from 1946 to 1956. After a successful interlude in the armed

forces, he became head of the signals intelligence section of the BND in 1967.^{[41](#)}

Furthermore, there are file memos by the former BND Vice President Dieter Blötz, that provide partial information about the administrative control procedures in eavesdropping and bearing reconnaissance of the BND and the Federal Armed Forces.^{[42](#)} Even if the infiltration of the Soviet and East German radio traffic or the bearing of radio systems in the GDR had nothing in common with the work of garrison operatives or travel spies, HUMINT and SIGINT cannot be seen as separate operational fields, which would only come together on the level of analysis and interpretation. The placing of sensors, for example, which were hidden along those railway tracks which the Western services assumed would transport nuclear weapons, depended on operations carried out by operatives. Only after the always-risky deployment of people, the technology could do its share in gaining information about the adversary.^{[43](#)}

Technological espionage against Soviet forces occupied a central position in the West German reconnaissance and was not limited to actions on German ground. Because of cooperation with other services of allied countries, Moscow's troops could be spied out in many places all over the world. Together with their Turkish partners, BND agents had a base for photo-reconnaissance in Istanbul where they collected information about Soviet war and trade ships that were passing through the Bosphorus Passage.^{[44](#)}

At the end of December 1969, an Israeli special taskforce seized a Soviet P-12 radar station in a surprise coup in Egypt, which was then transported by helicopters over the Red Sea to Israel where the BND took part in the technical analysis of the booty.^{[45](#)} This shows that Pullach's interests did not only concern the reconnaissance from Soviet radar in order to get information about dislocation, flight movements and the tactical-operational capabilities of the Warsaw Pact air forces. There was, rather, a connection between intelligence service acting and the strategic defense planning of the West, as the example of the operation "Caligula" (later "Cerberus") clearly illustrates. For the follow-up model of the tactical aircraft "Starfighter" the Federal Armed Forces needed a so-called "jammer"—an interfering transmitter—to effectively deceive the Soviet anti-aircraft radar. Only with

this prerequisite could the new jet airplane— the “Tornado”—act as a deterrent. One of its expected missions was to fly deep into airspace east of the Elbe river, carrying tactical nuclear weapons and guiding them to their targets. In order to interfere with the East German radar, the West German Air Force had to know what frequencies the Soviets would use in an emergency. Thus, West German tactical aircraft had to fly seemingly accidentally into the airspace of their Eastern neighbor, forcing them to switch from training frequency to war frequency. However, the experienced operators of the Soviet aerial defense never made this mistake. Therefore, the BND decided together with Israel, the Italian Military Secret Service and the Persian SAVAK (*Sazman-i-amniyatva ittala at-i-kishwar*) to attempt to infiltrate the aerial defense of the Warsaw Pact in other regions of the world. In Brindisi, Italy, and in the area around Teheran, Iran, stations were installed which kept the south-eastern and southern flank of the Soviet sphere of influence under surveillance by using radar technology. After the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979, the BND did not hesitate to come to an agreement with the CIA and the Chinese Secret Service in order to build a new station in the Pamir Mountains which was supposed to detect and measure Soviet radar emissions. Now Chinese pilots provoked Moscow’s military, and indeed the less-experienced air surveillance at the Pamir frontline made the anticipated mistake. After the BND had finally received information on the emergency frequencies, the jammer for the “Tornado” could be developed.⁴⁶ From secondhand sources it is known that the BND succeeded in buying a Soviet T-72 tank during the Cold War. It was bought by way of middlemen in Bulgaria and finally shipped to the Federal Republic on the Danube.⁴⁷ As early as the 1970s the BND cooperated with Israel: an intensive technological exchange took place under the code name operation “London.” By using this cooperation, Pullach gained possession of a SA-2 surface-to-air missile, a modern Soviet BMP armored personnel carrier and two T-62 tanks.⁴⁸ Besides SIGINT, operations like those mentioned above—which can be only briefly outlined here—added to the repertoire of the intelligence activities of the BND against Moscow’s troops.

Quality and amount of BND military espionage on East German territory

What can currently be ascertained about the actual output of intelligence results through single spies or about the total amount of BND military signals intelligence against East Germany? Based on an authentic case, Pullach's HUMINT potential shall now be presented in order to answer this question. This case study has to rely on MfS files because correlating BND files are not yet available. As the MfS documents are investigation files, which the secret police later wanted to use against the suspects in court, it can be assumed that the statements of the particular spy are authentic. However, the question this person deliberately left out or cannot remember after years or decades must remain open. The following example is about a GDR citizen who found better opportunities for his secret activities than West German travel or transit spies, who tended to visit the GDR for only a short period or just travel along the transit routes. While statements about the number of West German BND informants are not possible, a first preliminary estimate assumes that approximately 10,000 GDR citizens were working for Pullach. Thus, after describing this particular case study, this chapter will go further into the question how this "nice round number" can be clarified.⁴⁹

Johannes W., the son of a head forester, was born in 1906.⁵⁰ He grew up near Stettin and joined the NSDAP and SA after 1933. He served in the *Wehrmacht* throughout World War II. At the end of the war he was a sergeant at the *Flak* (Air Defense). After 1945 he became a farmer and slowly worked his way up. Between 1959 and 1971, W. worked as an agricultural engineer in Anklam and near Pasewalk in the north-east of the GDR (Western Pomerania). He did not settle down after he had retired in 1971, though, he continued working as an engineer until 1984, later as a night guard and as an insurance agent.

At the beginning of the 1950s Johannes W., who rejected the East German political system and especially its agriculture policy, had been hired by the Gehlen Organization under the codename "Gerber." He delivered information about the structure of the Soviet garrison in the area Eggesin/Torgelow, the deployment of tanks in the area and the retro-fitting of the railway line to Stettin from single to double track for military transports. W. also supplied reports about the development of agriculture in the GDR. According to W., the BND stopped working with him because he

could no longer deliver sufficient information for the West German intelligence service. In 1958 the BND broke contact with W.

From 1973 on, W. enjoyed annual trips to the West after he had retired. Within his recollection he started to work for the BND again in 1974/1975 because he was angry about his small East German pension. He cooperated with the BND under his old codename “Gerber” for another decade, but in spring 1986 the West German service stopped working with him without advance notice due to his old age.

Because the MfS suspected him of spying for the West, the East German secret police had been investigating W. from September 1964 to January 1971. The investigations were to no avail because W. did not work for the BND during this particular period, and the indications that had led to the investigation were actually based on suspicions from the years 1953 to 1955. Because there had been no contact with the BND in the second half of the 1960s, there were no results on post, customs and car checks. His secretly monitored radio was not capable of receiving broadcasts from the BND. Therefore, the MfS lacked concrete evidence. They had to stop their investigations, even though they still suspected him. Only at the end of his activities for the BND in 1986 could the MfS finally catch and convict the engineer and thus reconstruct the whole extent of his military espionage. In March 1987, only three days after his final interrogation, Johannes W. died of a stroke at the age of almost 81.

“Gerber” belonged to the “typical” garrison operatives that Pullach could still work with besides the transit and travel spies between the mid-1970s and the 1980s. The BND benefited from his local knowledge, his freedom of movement, his contacts and his reach of action, which he had because he owned a car. He made reconnaissance tours on foot and by train and used all possible methods to get target-oriented intelligence from different people. He spied on radar and anti-aircraft units as well as on the Peene shipyard in Wolgast which specialized in the construction of small battle ships. Further, he collected intelligence material about the airfield of the 9th Air Force Squadron of the National People’s Army in Peenemünde as well as about Soviet barracks in Prenzlau and Bernau, the airfield of the 19th Guards Strike Fighter Regiment of the GSFG/GSSD in Rechlin and the

Combat Helicopter Squadron 5 of the NVA in Basepohl. He always reported orally to the BND.

This example shows that Pullach's idea of recruiting GDR pensioners had success to some extent. The question is, how many "Gerbers"—not only pensioners—did in fact spy against the GSOFG/GSBT and GSFG/GSSD and against the NVA? By way of comparison: for the period 1950–1989 it is estimated that 12,000 West German citizens spied for different units of the MfS, approximately half of them for the HVA. In 1989 there were 3,000 to 4,000 unofficial West German collaborators of the MfS. For every 100,000 West German citizens, five volunteered to work secretly for the GDR.⁵¹

In contrast to the documentation of the Office of the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the former Ministry for State Security of the GDR (*Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR*—BStU), there is no information about number and names of people spying for the West in the unclassified files of the BND at the Federal Archive. Two former officers of the MfS section HA II state that their counterintelligence had captured more than 5,000 employees of Western intelligence services within 40 years. Some 80 percent of them (approximately 4,000 people) allegedly worked for the BND. According to their statements, 80 percent of the entire espionage was directed against the military potential of the Soviet troops stationed in the GDR.⁵² Those 4,000 spies who worked for the Federal Republic are not sorted into West or East German citizens, the number refers only to those who were apprehended on East German territory. In 1995, Bernd Schmidbauer, then intelligence coordinator at the Federal Chancellery, admitted without going into further detail: "1,000 of our people were imprisoned in the East."⁵³ More precise numbers are known for the 1940s and 1950s. Gehlen advisor, Critchfield, reported that in 1949 the Gehlen Organization had worked with about 600 sources in East Germany.⁵⁴ According to the *Annual History Report* of the US Army Headquarters Europe, Gehlen had been able to fall back on 4,000 spies behind the Iron Curtain, referring to a territory that consisted of more than East Germany,⁵⁵ A specimen calculation reveals an approximate number: between 13 August and 31 December 1961—i.e., in the four-and-a-half-month period immediately after the building of the Berlin Wall—the BND received reports from seven different spies about the Air Signal Corps

Barracks in above-mentioned Bernau. This is just one particular example that shows that the agents were still able to communicate with the West after the borders had been closed.⁵⁶ Extrapolating the example of the closely guarded garrison of Bernau to only one-fourth of the most guarded objects among the 480 in the “Garrison Files GDR” registered facilities of the GSFG/GSSD, one can say that there were 840 people spying against the above-calculated 120 garrisons within the critical period of the second half of 1961. Projecting the entire number of garrisons, and considering the period from 1946 until the collapse of the network beginning in 1964, makes the stated number of 10,000 East German spies seem conservative but certainly not overestimated; even if one keeps the unknown fluctuation of the sources and the decreasing number of East German spies in the 1970s and 1980s in mind. However, these preliminary yet feasible estimates still need archival backup.

The historical context of Pullach’s military espionage

From the beginning of the Gehlen Organization to the end of the GDR, military espionage was consistently one of the key areas of intelligence interest for the BND. Different strategies of this *order-of-battle-intelligence*, its extent, success, but also its limits and deficits are gradually becoming more clear. Even with all the necessary caution owing to the still small empirical basis at this early stage of file-based historical research,

- one can speak of a very successful reconnaissance against Soviet troops in East Germany in the 1950s and early 1960s;
- one has to assume that MfS counterintelligence gained the upper hand from the second half of the 1960s to the early 1970s, a period which marked the low point of West German reconnaissance on GDR territory; and
- one can say that when Klaus Kinkel and Hans-Georg Wieck followed as Presidents of the BND, the West German service was able to launch new operational initiatives which presented the MfS counterintelligence with significant problems during their last decade of existence.

This evaluation refers to HUMINT operations carried out by the BND on East German territory and does not include the results of technological reconnaissance, the questioning of migrants or defectors or any intelligence information shared by allied services

The story of East-West German espionage is a story of the confrontation of two competitive systems. The powerful East German MfS, which was repressive secret police, intelligence and counterintelligence agency in one, faced the West German services BfV (counterintelligence), MAD (military counterintelligence) and BND (intelligence), each of them with restricted rights only. The story of East-West German espionage is also an example of the East-West German entanglement during the Cold War. Thousands of human sources used by the services in their respective part of Germany created a “communications link” in the context of intelligence activities.⁵⁷ In addition to the apparently elite group of full-time agents and their sealed-off headquarters in East Berlin and Pullach, this link points out the daily dimensions of the spy business: the obviously confrontational demarcation of the opposing agencies is—at least on the level of the acting agents—an interlaced story that went on for 40 years; especially in the daily routine of military reconnaissance which was marked by various forms of “grassroots intelligence.”

In retrospect, how can Pullach’s intelligence activities be assessed? Normally, professional performance is not the prime measure of the historical evaluation of intelligence services. The legitimacy of espionage is not only judged on the aspect of threat to a society but also on the acting political authorities and the applied means. In liberal constitutional states the parliaments as well as the media more or less successfully exercise their control function in order to guarantee proportionate intelligence activities. In contrast, dictatorial regimes of nationalist or communist character lack any kind of legislative control and public discussion. Citing the words of a Federal Prosecutor who investigated the East German foreign intelligence in the 1990s, “Espionage is not done ‘l’art pour l’art’. It participates in a country’s national identity. Ethically it’s incommensurable.”⁵⁸

Intelligence activities are always bound to the intended purpose of their political leaders. Thus, the two German intelligence systems have to be

strictly distinguished from each other in their historical evaluation, even though there was some sort of interlacing at the actual operative level. When former MfS and HVA officers argue espionage had been a way of keeping *peace* on both sides of the Iron Curtain,⁵⁹ one must reply that only the East and West German spies of the BND could regard themselves as agents in the service of *freedom*.

Notes

1 John le Carré, *The Looking-Glass War*, New York: Coward-McCann, 1965, quotations pp. 63, 67, 99.

2 Cf. Peter F. Müller and Michael Mueller, *Gegen Freund und Feind. Der BND: Geheime Politik und schmutzige Geschäfte*, Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2002, pp. 112–115.

3 Paul Maddrell, *Spying on Science. Western Intelligence in Divided Germany 1945– 1961*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 7.

4 Armin Wagner and Matthias Uhl, *BND contra Sowjetarmee. Westdeutsche Militärspionage in der DDR*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2nd edn., 2008. Kurt Arlt, “Sowjetische (russische) Truppen in Deutschland (1945–1994),” in Torsten Diedrich (ed.), *Im Dienste der Partei. Handbuch der bewaffneten Organe der DDR*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 1998, pp. 593–632.

5 Cf. Günther K. Weiße, *Geheime Funkaufklärung in Deutschland 1945–1989*, Stuttgart: Motorbuch, 2005, pp. 108–254.

6 Waldemar Markwardt, *Erlebter BND, Kritisches Plädoyer eines Insiders*, Berlin: Anita Tykve, 1996, p. 119.

7 Hermann Zolling and Heinz Höhne, *Pullach intern. General Gehlen und die Geschichte des Bundesnachrichtendienstes*, Hamburg: Hoffmann and Campe, 1971; cf. also Müller and Mueller, *Gegen Freund und Feind*.

8 Jens Gieseke, *Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit. Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt 1950–1989/90*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2000.

9 Hubertus Knabe (ed.) *West-Arbeit des MfS. Das Zusammenspiel von "Aufklärung" und "Abwehr,"* Berlin: Ch. Links, 1999; Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds.), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu...DDR-Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003; Georg Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage. Eine analytische Studie*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007; Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced by Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-Tech World*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. For military intelligence see: Bodo Wegmann, *Die Militäraufklärung der NVA. Die zentrale Organisation der militärischen Aufklärung der Streitkräfte der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, Berlin: Dr Koester, 2006.

10 BAK, B 206/1075–1106: Handbücher und Informationen über Emigranten; B 206/1107–1762: DDR-Wirtschaft.

11 Bestand B 136 (Bundeskanzleramt), see www.bundesarchiv.de/foxpublic/1391ED7DOA062212000000001DOB8BF/findmittel.jsp (accessed April 2008).

12 Wagner and Uhl, *BND contra Sowjetarmee*; without considering the BND files collected in the Federal Archive in Koblenz: Maddrell, *Spying on Science*.

13 BAK, B 206/1–24, Karteikarten zur Roten Armee und den (Volksbefreiungs-)Armeen Osteuropas 1940 bis 1965; B 206/25–98, Feldpostnummerdatei der Roten Armee; B 206/107–116, Standortkartei DDR.

14 On Gehlen cf. Wolfgang Krieger, "'Dr Schneider' und der BND," in Wolfgang Krieger (ed.), *Geheimdienste in der Weltgeschichte. Spionage und verdeckte Operationen von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, München: C.H. Beck, 2003, pp. 230–247 and Dieter Krüger, "Reinhard Gehlen (1902–1979). Der BND-Chef als Schattenmann der Ära Adenauer," in Dieter Krüger and Armin Wagner (eds.), *Konspiration als Beruf. Deutsche Geheimdienstchefs im Kalten Krieg*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2003, pp. 207–236. On Gehlen and the CIA see Timothy Naftali, "Reinhard Gehlen and the United States," in Richard Breitman (ed.), *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 375–418.

15 Kevin C. Ruffner (ed.), *Forging an Intelligence Partnership: CIA and the Origins of the BND, 1945–49. A Documentary History*. Two volumes. Washington, DC: CIA History Staff, Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1999, Vol. 2, Document 72, Critchfield: Report of Investigation—RUSTY, 17 December 1948, pp. 105–106.

16 Cf. Matthew M. Aid, “A Tale of Two Countries. US Intelligence Community Relations with the Dutch and German Intelligence and Security Services, 1945–50,” in Beatrice de Graaf, Ben de Jong and Wies Platje (eds.), *Battleground Western Europe. Intelligence Operations in Germany and the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century*, Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2007, pp. 95–122.

17 Cf. James H. Critchfield, *Auftrag Pullach. Die Organisation Gehlen 1948–1956*, Hamburg/Berlin/Bonn: E.S. Mittler & Sohn, 2005 (Original: *Partners at the Creation. The Men Behind Postwar Germany’s Defense and Intelligence Establishments*, Annapolis, MD: U.S. Naval Institute Press, 2003, pp. 153, 161).

18 Cf. Wagner and Uhl, *BND contra Sowjetarmee*, pp. 87–93.

19 For detailed information cf. Hanna Labrenz-Weiß, *Die Hauptabteilung II: Spionageabwehr*, Berlin: BStU, 2001, pp. 32–37, and Karl Wilhelm Fricke and Roger Engelmann, ‘Konzentrierte Schläge’. *Staatssicherheitsaktionen und politische Prozesse in der DDR 1953–1956*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 1998, pp. 42–60.

20 Cf. the summary of the BND “Garrison Files GDR,” BAK, B 206/107–116; cf. also Zolling and Höhne, *Pullach intern*, p. 148.

21 Zolling and Höhne, *Pullach intern*, p. 10. Concerning the target structure as noticed by the MfS cf. Günther Möller and Wolfgang Stuchly, “Zur Spionageabwehr (HA II im MfS),” in Reinhard Grimmer (ed.), *Die Sicherheit. Zur Abwehrarbeit des MfS. 2 Bände*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 2002, Vol. 1, pp. 497–499.

22 Cf. BAK, B 206/117, Militärischer Lagebericht Dezember 1960, 20 December 1960, pp. CV 3-CVI 17.

23 Cf. National Security Archive Washington, DC, Memo: Soviet Missiles in East Germany, 22 April 1959, in Microfiches—The Berlin Crisis, 1958–1962, Washington DC, 1991, Doc. 01211.

24 Cf. BAK, B 206/119: Militärischer Lagebericht Dezember 1962, 15 December 1962.

25 All quotations from Richard Meier, *Geheimdienst ohne Maske. Der ehemalige Präsident des Bundesverfassungsschutzes über Agenten, Spione und einen gewissen Herrn Wolf*, Bergisch Gladbach: Lübbe, 1992, pp. 44–45.

26 Cf. Matthias Uhl and Armin Wagner, “Die Möglichkeiten, aber auch die Grenzen nachrichtendienstlicher Aufklärung in besonders verständlicher Weise, BND und Mauerbau, Juli-September 1961,” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 55 (2007), pp. 681–725.

27 Wagner and Uhl, *BND contra Sowjetarmee*, pp. 104–106.

28 Concerning the Military Liaison Missions cf. Wagner and Uhl, *BND contra Sowjetarmee*, pp. 52–59, with further literature.

29 Cf. Möller and Stuchly, *Zur Spionageabwehr*, pp. 519–520.

30 Cf. BStU (Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatsicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen DDR Berlin), MfS-HA II 24300, Erkenntnisse über die Spionagetätigkeit des Bundesnachrichtendienstes der BRD auf der Grundlage der im Jahre 1977 erzielten Ergebnisse des MfS der DDR, December 1977, pp. 2–3.

31 Cf. Jens Gieseke, *Der Mielke-Konzern. Die Geschichte der Stasi 1945–1990*, Stuttgart/München: DVA 2006, pp. 84–90.

32 BStU, MfS-HA II 23430, Einige Gedanken zu den Haupttendenzen im Vorgehen der Geheimdienste führender NATO-Staaten gegen die DDR und die anderen sozialistischen Staaten, undated, c. 1985, p. 75.

33 Figures according to Labrenz-Weiß, *Die Hauptabteilung II*, p. 31.

34 Ibid.

35 Cf. Dieter Krüger, “Gerhard Wessel (1913–2002). Der Ziehsohn Gehlens an der Spitze des BND,” in Dieter Krüger and Armin Wagner (eds.), *Konspiration als Beruf. Deutsche Geheimdienstchefs im Kalten Krieg*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2003, pp. 264–283.

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37 BStU, MfS-HA II 22589, Information: Angriffe des BND gegen militärische Objekte der GSSD, undated, c. 1988, p. 6.

38 Werner Großmann, *Bonn im Blick. Die DDR-Aufklärung aus der Sicht ihres letzten Chefs*, Berlin: Das Neue Berlin, 2001, pp. 141–143.

39 Cf. BAK, B 206/144, Militärischer Lagebericht Ost, Jahresabschlussbericht 1975, undated, c. late December 1975, p. C 3–11; BStU, MfS-HA II 30784, Analyse bedeutsamer militärischer Objekte der GSSD und der NVA, undated, c. 1982, pp. 255

40 Norbert Juretzko, *Bedingt dienstbereit. Im Herzen des BND—die Abrechnung eines Aussteigers*, Berlin: Ullstein, 2004.

41 Cf. Müller and Mueller, *Gegen Freund und Feind*, pp. 116–124; Weiße, *Geheime Funkaufklärung in Deutschland*, pp. 31–38.

42 Cf. Müller and Mueller, *Gegen Freund und Feind*, especially pp. 547–572.

43 Cf. Norbert Juretzko, *Bedingt dienstbereit*, pp. 13–53; Helmut Wagner, *Schöne Grüße aus Pullach. Operationen des BND gegen die DDR*, Berlin: Edition Ost, 2001, p. 63, annotation 25.

44 Cf. Erich Schmidt-Eenboom, *Der Schattenkrieger. Klaus Kinkel und der BND*, Düsseldorf: Econ, 1995, p. 28.

45 Cf. Shlomo Shpiro, "Israel-NATO Intelligence and Electronic Warfare Cooperation," in Beatrice de Graaf, Ben de Jong, Beatrice de Graaf and Wies Platje (eds.), *Battleground Western Europe. Intelligence Operations in Germany and the Netherlands in the Twentieth Century*. Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2007, p. 154.

46 Cf. Shlomo Shpiro, "Cold War Radar Intelligence: Operation 'Cerberus'," *The Journal of Intelligence History*, 6 (2006), No. 2, pp. 61–74 and Shpiro, "Israel-NATO Intelligence," pp. 156–163.

47 Cf. Eric Gujer, *Kampf an neuen Fronten. Wie sich der BND dem Terrorismus stellt*, Frankfurt/New York: Campus, 2006, p. 115.

48 Cf. Müller and Mueller, *Gegen Freund und Feind*, pp. 496–501.

49 Referring to the sneering tone from the left-wing daily newspaper "junge welt," 26 September 2007, p. 4.

50 The description of the case follows BStU, MfS-AOP 129/71, OV "Ingenieur"/OV "Nadel," Bd. III, Abschlussbericht der HA IX/1 vom 15.09.1989, pp. 190–226.

51 Cf. Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage*, pp. 82, 84, and Helmut Müller-Enbergs, *Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit. Teil 3: IM-Statistik*, Berlin: Ch. Links, 2008, pp. 115–123.

52 Cf. Möller and Stuchly, "Zur Spionageabwehr," pp. 435, 477.

53 Norbert F.Pötzl, *Basar der Spione. Die geheimen Missionen des DDR-Unterhändlers Wolfgang Vogel*, Hamburg: Spiegel-Buchverlag, 1997, p. 250.

54 Cf. Kevin C. Ruffner (ed.), *Forging an Intelligence Partnership*, Vol. 2, Document 72, Critchfield: Report of Investigation—RUSTY, 17 December 1948, p. 53.

55 Cf. Annual History Report, Headquarters, US Army Europe, 1 July 1954–30 June 1955, Historical Division, Headquarters, US Army Europe, 1956, p. 165.

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58 Joachim Lampe, “Die strafrechtliche Aufarbeitung der MfS-Westarbeit: Fortdauernde Lehren aus einem abgeschlossenen Kapitel deutscher Justiz- und Zeitgeschichte,” in Georg Herbstritt and Helmut Müller-Enbergs (eds.), *Das Gesicht dem Westen zu... DDR-Spionage gegen die Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Bremen: Edition Temmen, 2003, pp. 362.

59 Cf. Herbstritt, *Bundesbürger im Dienst der DDR-Spionage*, p. 409.

People index

Abel, Rudolf [16](#), [116](#)

Adenauer, Konrad [96](#), [114](#), [120](#)

Albert, Ludwig [39](#)

Alexander I, King [120](#)

Alten, Jürgen Magnus von [40](#), [46](#)ⁿ¹⁷

Alwardt, Peter [192](#), [196](#), [197](#)

Ames, Aldrich [38](#), [58](#), [64](#), [75](#), [196](#)

Arnold, Gerhard [195](#)

Atwood, James [188](#)

B., August [199](#)

Bach, Erwin [171](#)

Barczatis, Helene [35](#)

Bartel, Manfred [193](#)

Barthels, Karl [226](#)

Barthou, Louis [120](#)

Bearden, Milton [49](#), [78](#), [87](#)ⁿ³⁶, [187](#)–90

Bentley, Elizabeth [12](#), [13](#)

Beria, Lavrenti [16](#)

Berndt, Andreas [196](#)

Birthler, Marianne [31](#)n6, [83](#), [87](#)n56

Bittman, Ladislav [116](#), [122](#), [128](#)

Blake, George [14](#), [26](#), [28](#), [31](#)

Blaschke, Kurt [200](#)–1

Blayer, Günter [197](#)–8

Blecha, Kurt [113](#)

Bloch, Felix [75](#)

Blötz, Dieter [40](#), [229](#)

Blunt, Anthony [13](#)

Boel, Erik [153](#)

Bohnsack, Günter [139](#)

Brandt, Willy [4](#), [79](#), [84](#)–5, [123](#)

Bräutigam, Hans Otto [42](#)

Brehmer, Herbert [139](#)

Brinkmann, Alex [57](#)

Brückner [43](#)

Budenz, Louis [12](#)

Bulganin, Nikolai A. [206](#)

Burgess, Guy [13](#)

Busch, Heinz [74](#), [78](#), [142](#)

Bush, George H.W. [74](#), [187](#)

C., Charlie [195](#)

Carney, Jeffrey [60](#)–2, [79](#)

Carrè, John le [219](#)

Chambers, Whittaker [12](#)

Clark, James Michael [79](#)

Clay, Lucius D. [100](#)

Clemens, Hans [14](#), [39](#)

Clinton, Bill [82](#)

Cohen, Morris [12](#)

Courtney, Anthony [15](#)

Critchfield, James [223](#), [233](#)

Cyron, Peter Oswald [195](#)

Daugherty, William E. [118](#)

Dejean, Maurice [14](#), [17](#)

Delmers, Sefton [117](#)

Deriabin, Piotr [6](#), [14](#), [16](#)

Dölling, Peter [193](#)

Dolzer, Rudolf [78](#)

Dörrenberg, Dirk [78](#), [80](#), [83](#), [189](#)

Dragsdahl, Jørgen [154](#)

Duebendorfer, Rachel [11](#)

Ehmke, Horst [34](#), [227](#)

Eisler, Gerhardt [13](#)

Engberding, Rainer [191](#)

Engholm, Björn [80](#)

Falin, Valentin M. [207](#)

Fedorov, Mikhail [15](#), [16](#)

Felfe, Heinz [14](#), [26](#), [30](#), [31](#), [33](#)ⁿ⁴⁴, [36](#), [39](#), [40](#), [224](#), [225](#)

Feuerstein, Dieter [192](#), [194](#), [198](#)

Fischer, Bernd [xiv](#), [74](#), [77](#)

Fischer, Oskar [42](#)

Fischer, Willie [16](#)

Foot, Allan [12](#)

Franco, Francisco [148](#)

Frauendorf, Stefan [155](#)

Freiberg, Walter [171](#)

Friis, Thomas Wegener [8](#), [165](#), [178](#)

Fruck, Hans [135](#), [142](#)

Fuchs, Klaus [13](#)

Gast, Gabriele [39](#), [79](#), [84](#)

Gates, Robert M. [49](#)

Gauck, Joachim [170](#)

Gehlen, Reinhard [34](#), [36](#), [128](#), [222](#), [227](#), [229](#), [233](#)

Genscher, Hans-Dietrich [94](#)

Genschow, Rudolf [xiv](#), [140](#), [142](#)

Gerson, Günter [195](#)

Geyer, Hans Joachim [39](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹²

Gieseke, Jens [172](#)

Gladitz, Dieter [195](#)

Goliath, Inge [139](#)

Golitsyn, Anatoli [16–17](#)

Gorbachev, Michael [42](#), [139](#), [144](#), [229](#)

Gordievsky, Oleg [154](#)

Gouzenko, Igor [11](#), [13](#)

Gramsch, Walter [35](#)

Green, Oliver [12](#)

Greene, Graham [192](#)

Grossmann, Werner [xiv](#), [64](#), [77](#), [84](#), [135](#), [139](#), [142](#), [169](#), [171](#), [188](#)

Grotewohl, Otto [35](#)

Gruschko, Viktor F. [116](#)

Guibaud, Louis [14](#)

Guillaume, Günter [4](#), [79](#), [84](#)–5

H., Fritz [193](#)

Haase, Gustav Holm [149](#), [156](#)–7

Haavik, Gunvor [14](#)

Hall, James W. III [60](#)–2, [79](#)

Halle, Günter [113](#), [115](#)

Hambleton, Hugh [16](#)

Harrison, Geoffrey [14](#)

Hartenstein, Kurt [171](#)

Hathaway, Gus [75](#)

Hayhanen, Reino [16](#)

Heidorn, Günter [121](#)

Helmich, Joseph G. [213](#)–14

Hemmann, Rainer [77](#), [188](#)

Hepp, Leo [36](#), [229](#)

Herbstritt, Georg [167](#)

Herschel, Günther [171](#)

Himmler, Heinrich [126](#)

Hoekstra, Frits [168](#)

Höher, Wolfgang Paul [39](#), [45](#)n13

Holle, Wolfgang [200](#)

Honecker, Erich [42](#), [128](#), [139](#), [169](#), [174](#)–6, [226](#)

Horn, Eva [177](#)

Houghton, Harry [15](#)

Howard, Edward Lee [57](#), [64](#)

Inman, Bobby Ray [49](#)

Irmscher, Günter [xiv](#), [171](#)

Jägel, Günter [139](#), [142](#)

Jahn, Roland [142](#)

Jänicke, Horst [105](#)

Jannowitz, Morris [118](#)

Jensen, Erik [127](#)

Jess, Hanns [35](#)

Jessen, Ralph [177](#)

Karlstedt, Uwe [143](#)

Kastner, Hermann [35](#), [44](#)ⁿ⁵

Kaznacheev, Alexander [16](#)

Kekkonen, Urho [16](#)

Kennedy, John F. [210](#), [211](#)–12

Khokhlov, Nikolai [6](#), [14](#)

Kiesinger, Kurt Georg [124](#)

King, John [12](#)

Kinkel, Klaus [37](#), [38](#), [228](#), [233](#)

Koch, Peter F. [143](#)

Kohl, Helmut [75](#), [76](#), [80](#), [139](#)

Köhler, Peter [173](#), [192](#), [196](#)

Kopprasch, Eberhard [xiv](#), [106](#)

Korb, Robert [142](#)

Krase, Joachim [138](#)

Kratsch, Günther [36](#), [39](#)

Krenz, Egon [42](#)

Krichbaum, Willi [39](#)

Krivitsky, Walter [12](#)

Krotkov, Yuri [17](#)

Kruglov, Sergei [14](#)

Krutikov, Feliks [15–16](#)

Kubu, Mert [126](#), [127](#)

Kuron, Klaus [79](#), [138](#), [196](#)

Lager, Fritjof [121](#)

Lamberz, Werner

Lang, Horst [196](#), [201](#)

Larsen, Aksel [123](#)

Laszak, Manfred [139](#)

Laurenz, Karl [35](#)

Leiser, Fred [219](#)

Livingston, Robert Gerry [7](#), [70](#)

Lonsdale, Gordon [116](#)

Lüttich, Eberhard [104](#)–9, [111](#)

Lutze, Lothar [150](#)

Lygren, Ingeborg [14](#)

Lyubimov, Victor A. [213](#)–14

Maclean, Donald [13](#)

Macrakis, Kristie [9](#), [136](#)

Mader, Julius [125](#)–6

Madsen, Carl [124](#)–5, [128](#)

Malinovsky, Rodion Yakovlevich [210](#), [212](#)

Massing, Hede [13](#)

May, Allan Nunn [11](#)

Meier, Richard [36](#), [225](#), [227](#)

Mewis, Karl [126](#)

Meyer, Jörg [149](#), [152](#), [159](#)

Mielke, Erich [xv](#), [3](#), [26](#), [27](#), [61](#), [71](#), [124](#)–5, [134](#), [139](#), [143](#)–4, [164](#), [166](#), [175](#), [226](#)

Mitrokhin, Vasili [189](#)

Mittag, Günter [139](#)

Modrow, Hans [42](#)

Morros, Boris [13](#)

Mroz, Wladislaw [15](#)

Müller, Gerhard [196](#)

Müller-Enbergs, Helmut [8](#), [22](#), [136](#), [171](#)

Münzenberg, Willi [113](#)

Nauen, Cornelia [194](#)

Neumann, Willie [192](#)

Norden, Albert [35](#), [113](#)–15

Nosenko, Yuri [17](#)

Oberländer, Theodor [121](#)

Oelzner, Heinz [157](#)

Olsson, Lasse [126](#)

Orlov, Alexander [12](#)

P., Sebastian [41](#)

Pachmann, Gerfried [40](#), [46](#)n19

Paproth, Wilhelm [195](#)

Paques, George [14](#), [16](#)

Penkovsky, Oleg [17](#), [214](#), [218](#)n40

Pérez, Zayda Caridad Gutiérrez [58](#)

Petchik, Bernd [147](#)

Petrov, Vladimir [14](#)

Philby, Kim [13](#), [15](#), [16](#), [26](#), [31](#)

Pieck, Henri [12](#)

Polyakov, Dimitry F. [214](#), [215](#)

Ponomarjow, Boris [174](#)

Popov, Piotr [208](#), [216](#)

Praeger, Gerhard [195](#)

Praun, Albert [36](#)

Principalov, Aleksander [77](#)

Putin, Vladimir [198](#)

Rastvorov, Yuri [6](#), [14](#)

Raussendorff, Klaus von [197](#)

Redmond, Paul [78](#)

Reinhard, Eberhard [105](#), [109](#)

Rhodes, Roy [14](#)

Rietig, Wolfgang [37](#), [44](#)ⁿ¹⁰

Rodig, Lutz [195](#)

Rogalla, Jürgen [xiv](#), [75](#)

Rolph, David [75](#), [188](#), [189](#)

Rösler, Klaus [xiv](#), [142](#), [143](#), [171](#)

Rotsch, Manfred [194](#)

Rumsfeld, Donald [81](#)

Rupp, Rainer [72](#), [79](#), [190](#)

S., Hans [105](#), [106](#), [108](#), [109](#)

S., Jevgenij [148](#)

Sachs, Nelly [121](#)

Sakharovsky, Alexander M. [205](#)

Samiec, Rudolf [149](#)

Scarbeck, Irwin [15](#)

Scharping, Rudolf [80](#)

Schevitz, Jeffrey [79](#)

Schlobohm, Eckhard [195](#), [200](#)

Schmude, Jürgen [80](#)

Schnabel, Reimund [124](#)

Schröder, Gerhard [82](#), [83](#)

Schulz, George [94](#)

Schulz, Hans-Dieter [41](#)

Schütt, Harry [xiv](#), [42](#), [53](#)

Schütz, Karl-Theodor [39](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹⁶

Scott, Edward [15](#)

Serov, Ivan A. [14](#), [205](#), [208](#), [214](#)

Shalin, Mikhail A. [207](#)

Shelepin, Aleksandr [14](#)

Smith, Richard Ellis [15](#)

Sommer, Hans [39](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹⁴

Sorge, Richard [116](#), [198](#)

Spangenberg, Max [124](#)

Speidel, Hans [120](#)

Spuhler, Alfred [39](#), [44](#)ⁿ¹¹, [138](#), [157](#)

Squillacote, Theresa Marie [79](#)

Stahlmann, Richard [143](#)

Stalin, Joseph [204](#)–7

Stashinsky, Bogdan [16](#)

Steinberg, Arthur G. [11](#)

Stickel, Peter [192](#)

Stiller, Werner [4](#), [40](#), [155](#), [186](#), [192](#)

Stonehouse, John [15](#)

Strand, Kurt Alan [79](#)

Straub, Katherina [194](#)

Strauss, Werner [171](#)

Swiatlo, Josef [15](#)

Szinda, Gustav [142](#)

Takman, John [126](#)

Talbott, Strobe [86](#)

Telschow, Michael [142](#)

Tenet, George [81](#), [82](#)

Thomsen, Hans [126](#)

Tiebel, Erwin [39](#)

Tuomi, Kaarlo [16](#)

Uhrlau, Ernst [82](#)

Ulbricht, Walter [29](#), [172](#), [223](#)

Urickij, Semen P. [204](#)

Uris, Leon [16](#)

Ustinov, Dimitry F. [210](#)

Uyl, Joop den [171](#)

Vassall, John [14](#), [16](#)

Vieweg, Kurt [124](#), [127](#)

Vilkuna, Kustaa [16](#)

Voigt, Karsten [80](#)

Volkov, Konstantin [13](#), [16](#)

W., Johannes [231](#), [232](#)

Wagenbreth, Rolf [xiv](#), [113](#), [117](#), [118](#), [117–19](#), [139](#), [140](#)

Wagner, Klaus [162](#), [168](#)

Walker, John [196](#)

Watkins, John [14](#)

Webster, William [74](#), [187](#)

Wehner, Herbert [79](#), [123](#)

Weigelt, Frank [191](#)

Weiner, Tim [49](#)

Weisband, William [13](#)

Wendland, Horst [40](#), [46](#)ⁿ²⁰

Wessel, Gerhard [36](#), [37](#), [227](#)

Wieck, Hans-Georg [34](#), [228](#), [233](#)

Wiegand, Rainer [188](#)

Wienand, Karl [79](#), [80](#)

Wiesel, Rolf [92](#)

Winkelmann, Egon [157](#)

Wittig, Manfred [199](#)

Wolf, Markus [4](#), [15](#), [25](#), [37](#), [41](#), [42](#), [51](#), [52](#), [53](#), [54](#), [55](#), [58](#), [60](#), [61](#), [62](#), [64](#), [71](#),
[73](#), [75](#), [77](#), [81](#), [84](#), [85](#), [115](#)–17, [134](#)–6, [143](#)–6, [158](#), [165](#), [188](#), [191](#)

Wollweber, Ernst [26](#), [35](#), [148](#)

Zuber, Ebrulf [40](#), [46](#)ⁿ²¹

Place index

Aachen [192](#), [195](#)

Aarhus [155](#), [158](#)

Alexandria, Virginia [102](#)

Amsterdam [176](#)

Ankara [14](#)

Anklam [105](#), [231](#)

Arlington [100](#)

Augsburg [192](#)

Bad Aibling [37](#)

Bad Reichenhall [39](#)

Baden-Baden [210](#)

Baden Wurttemberg [226](#)

Bahamas [107](#)

Baltic Sea [8](#), [115](#), [121](#), [123](#)

Barcelona [12](#)

Basepohl [232](#)

Bavaria [50](#), [72](#), [96](#), [124](#), [138](#), [226](#)

Beirut [16](#)

Belzig [117](#)

Berlin, West [5](#), [23](#), [25–30](#), [36](#), [41](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹³, [48–50](#), [53](#), [55–6](#), [60–4](#), [67](#)ⁿ⁵⁸, [78–9](#), [87](#)ⁿ³⁷, [96](#), [98–105](#), [135–6](#), [138](#), [141](#), [169](#), [192](#), [200](#), [207–8](#), [210](#), [214](#), [224](#), [226](#)

Bernau [225](#), [232](#)–3

Bernburg [41](#)

Bielefeld [192](#)

Bonn [8](#), [14](#), [42–3](#), [44](#)ⁿ⁵, [45](#)ⁿ¹⁵, ⁿ¹⁶, [46](#)ⁿ¹⁹, [56](#), [66](#)ⁿ²⁷, [78](#), [80](#), [87](#)ⁿ³⁶, [93](#), [95](#), [100–1](#), [106](#), [109](#), [114–15](#), [136](#), [156](#), [194](#), [224](#), [226](#)–7

Boston [108](#)

Brandenburg woods [71](#)

Brindisi [230](#)

Brno [41](#)–2

Brussels [11](#), [148](#), [194](#)

Bucharest [122](#)

Budapest [63](#), [199](#)

Cairo [38](#)

California [74](#), [99](#), [188](#)

Cambridge [20](#), [99–100](#), [196](#)

Canberra [14](#)

Checkpoint Charlie [209](#), [213](#), [215](#)

Chemnitz [229](#);

see also Karl-Marx-Stadt

Cologne [45–6n16](#), [114](#), [199](#)

Copenhagen [124](#), [138](#), [147–58](#)

Danube, river [38](#), [230](#)

Danzig [219](#)

Djakarta [38](#)

Dresden [35](#), [42](#), [95](#), [137](#), [196](#), [199](#)

Düsseldorf [41](#), [46n16](#), [100](#), [140](#)

Eggesin [231](#)

Eibergen [165](#)

Elbe, river [229–30](#)

Erfurt [210](#)

Evdokia [14](#)

Flensburg [37](#)

Ford Bragg [214](#)

Frankfurt [14–15](#), [35](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹⁵, [50](#), [60–1](#), [79](#), [99](#), [100](#), [210](#), [224](#), [229](#)

Frankfurt/Main [50](#), [79](#), [100](#), [210](#)

Frankfurt/Oder [224](#), [229](#)

Frederikshavn [148](#)

Gdansk *see* Danzig

Geneva [17](#), [56](#)

Georgetown [99–100](#)

Gosen [71](#)

Göteborg *see* Gothenburg

Gothenburg [154](#)

Göttingen [192](#)

Greifswald [124](#), [127](#)

Grunewald [60](#)

Haderslev [148](#)

Hague, The [14](#), [165](#), [170](#), [176](#), [179](#)ⁿ²², [180](#)ⁿ⁴⁴

Hamburg [41](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹⁴, [50](#), [56](#), [82](#), [96](#), [100](#), [105–9](#), [117](#)

Hannover [96](#)–7

Harderwijk [168](#)

Havana [59](#), [81](#), [192](#)

Heidelberg [100](#), [103](#), [214](#)

Helsinki [16](#), [122](#), [163](#)

Henningsdorf [223](#)

Holy Loch [209](#)

Husum [37](#)

Istanbul [13](#), [15](#), [230](#)

Jena [103](#), [156](#), [186](#)

Jutland [150](#), [158](#)

Kaiserslautern [103](#)

Kalkstadt [219](#)

Karl-Marx-Stadt [101](#), [229](#);

see also Chemnitz

Karlshorst [66](#)n35, [76](#)–7, [86](#)n34, [189](#)

Karlsruhe [79](#), [93](#), [195](#)

Karup [149](#)

Kassel [41](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹⁶

Kew [20](#), [31](#)ⁿ³

Kiev [222](#)

Koblenz [45](#)ⁿ¹⁶, [221](#), [229](#), [235](#)ⁿ¹²

Köln *see* Cologne

Krefeld [208](#)

Langenargen [37](#)

Langley [63](#), [75](#)–8, [80](#), [82](#)–3, [189](#), [223](#)

Lehnitz [108](#)

Leipzig [105](#), [192](#), [197](#), [210](#), [228](#)

Lissabon [155](#)

London [11](#)–17, [31](#)ⁿ³, [105](#), [117](#), [141](#), [214](#), [219](#)–20, [230](#)

Lübeck [219](#)

Ludwigslust [226](#)

McLean [78](#)

Magdeburg [210](#), [228](#)–9

Manhattan [106](#)–7

Mansfelder Land [223](#)

Marburg [45](#)ⁿ¹⁶

Mecklenburg [25](#), [219](#), [226](#)

Medford [99](#)

Mexico City [61](#), [103](#), [107](#)–8, [214](#)

Montreal [107](#)

Moscow [11](#)–[17](#), [42](#), [49](#), [53](#)–4, [61](#), [76](#), [78](#), [93](#), [106](#), [116](#), [150](#), [153](#), [188](#)–9, [198](#), [208](#), [213](#)–15, [220](#), [222](#)–3, [230](#)–1

Mühlhausen [224](#)

Munich [38](#), [45](#)–6ⁿ¹⁶, [46](#)ⁿ²⁰, [55](#)–6, [96](#), [100](#), [195](#), [199](#), [223](#)

Neubrandenburg [229](#)

New York [13](#), [16](#), [49](#), [77](#), [99](#), [100](#), [102](#), [105](#)–9, [190](#), [214](#)

Norfolk [214](#)

North Rhine-Westphalia [138](#)

Norwegian Sea [209](#)

Odense [154](#)–5

Oder, river [229](#)

Oranienburg

Oresund [157](#)

Oslo [14](#)

Ottawa [11](#), [14](#), [16](#)

Pamir Mountains [230](#)

Paris [11–16](#), [212–14](#), [218](#)ⁿ³⁵

Pasewalk [231](#)

Peenemünde [232](#)

Pomerania [35](#), [219](#), [231](#)

Potsdam [37](#), [103–4](#), [118](#), [126–7](#), [142](#), [229](#)

Prague [14–15](#), [40](#), [63](#), [221](#)

Preetz [41–2](#)

Prenzlau [232](#)

Pullach [35–43](#), [221–34](#)

Rammstein [213](#)

Rangoon [16](#)

Rechlin [232](#)

Red Sea [230](#)

Römhild [105](#)

Roskilde [158](#)

Rostock [121](#), [126](#), [149](#), [219](#), [224](#), [229](#)

Rotterdam [168](#), [170](#)

Saarland [138](#)

San Diego [83](#)

Santa Monica [99](#)

Saxony [35](#), [226](#)

Schleswig-Holstein [151](#), [158](#)

Schönefeld [76](#)

Schwerin [35](#), [210](#), [229](#)

Sofia [14](#)

Sønderborg [155](#)

Stettin [231](#)

Stockholm [120](#)–1, [126](#)

Stuttgart [46](#)n16, [100](#), [103](#)

Suhl [105](#)–9, [200](#), [224](#)

Tbilisi [214](#)

Teheran [230](#)

Tempelhof [61](#), [100](#)

Teufelsberg [60](#), [100](#)

Thüringen [195](#);

see also Thuringia

Thuringia [83](#);

see also Thüringen

Torgelow [231](#)

Trier [39](#), [45](#)ⁿ¹⁶

Vienna [11](#), [14](#), [16](#), [35](#), [38](#), [40](#), [56](#), [60](#), [107](#), [124](#), [199](#)

Washington [12](#), [38](#), [58](#), [63](#), [66](#)ⁿ²⁷, [76](#)–7, [82](#), [99](#)–[104](#), [190](#), [214](#), [220](#)

West Point [100](#)

Wismar [108](#)

Woensdrecht [168](#)

Wolgast [232](#)

Wünsdorf [210](#)

Zealand [156](#)

Zurich [105](#), [199](#)

Cover names and operations index

‘Abruf’ [167](#), [168](#), [175](#), [179](#)ⁿ²²

‘Acker’ [192](#)

‘Ackermann’ [40](#), [46](#)

‘Adler’ [93](#)

‘Ahrendt’ [193](#)

‘Alfred’ [192](#), [196](#), [197](#)

‘Angela’ [101](#), [111](#)

‘Angelika’ [94](#), [110](#)

‘Anker’ [101](#)

‘Anmeldung’, Operation [108](#), [159](#)

‘Anna’ [97](#), [111](#)

‘Antos’ [103](#)

‘Arctic fox’, Operation [123](#)

‘Aufbau’, Operation [102](#)

‘Auslese’ [98](#)

‘Auto’ [97](#), [111](#)

‘Bauer’ [192](#)

‘Beatriz’ [166](#)

‘Becker’ [96](#)

‘Bende’ [158](#)

‘Berger’ [95](#)

‘Bernd’ [101](#), [111](#)

‘Bernhard’ [104](#)

‘Bichler’ [38](#)

‘Bill’ [195](#)

‘Birke’ [195](#)

‘Blitz’, Operation [27](#), [33](#)ⁿ³⁴

‘Bob’ [98](#)

‘Brede’ [93](#)

‘Brest’ [8](#), [92](#), [104](#), [106](#), [107](#)

‘Brutus’ [35](#)

‘Carola’ [144](#)

‘Charly’ [150](#)

‘Club’ [98](#)

‘Curly’ [63](#), [64](#)

‘Denkmal’ [169](#)

‘Depot’ [150](#)

‘Dohle’ [93](#)

‘Dom’, Operation [59](#)

‘Dora’ [191](#), [193](#)

‘Drache’ [43](#)

‘Dupont’ [102](#)

‘Elan’ [151](#)

‘Elch’ [158](#)

‘Erich’ [101](#), [111](#)

‘Erwin’ [94](#)

‘Feuerwerk’, Operation [26](#), [35](#)

‘Fichtel’ [94](#), [95](#), [110](#)

‘Filius’ [158](#)

‘Filter’ [196](#), [201](#)

‘Flame’ [156](#)

‘Frieze’ [193](#)

‘Frühling’, Operation [27](#)

‘Fürst’ [101](#)

‘Gaston’ [98](#)

‘Gerber’ [137](#), [231](#), [232](#)

‘Gerhard’ [101](#)

‘German’ [195](#)

‘Gitta’ [109](#)

‘Grünberg’ [148](#)

‘Günter’ [195](#), [196](#), [200](#)

‘Guron’ [213](#), [214](#)

‘Gustav’ [195](#), [199](#)

‘Hagen’ [154](#), [155](#)

‘Hampe’ [102](#)

‘Hampf’ [149](#)

‘Handke’ [159](#)

‘Hans’ [98](#)

‘Hansen’ [79](#)

‘Harry’ [151](#)

‘Harz’ [97](#)

‘Heizer’ [99](#)

‘Hempel’ [103](#)

‘Herbert’ [153](#)

‘Herta’ [96](#), [110](#)

‘Hilmar’ [167](#), [168](#), [178](#), [179](#)

‘Hilmar Kohl’ [200](#)

‘Hoffmann’ [101](#)

‘Hubig’ [151](#), [158](#)

‘Ilona’ [194](#)

‘Iltis’ [97](#), [110](#)

‘Ingrid’ [104](#)

‘Irmgard Krüger’ [192](#)

‘Jack’ [79](#), [102](#), [111](#)

‘Jimmy’ [104](#)

‘Jörg’ [104](#)

‘Jürgen’ [196](#)

‘Junge’ [95](#)

‘Junior’ [79](#)

‘Käfer’ [147](#)

‘Kai’ [166](#), [169](#)

‘Kid’ [60](#), [101](#)

‘Kirchner’ [99](#)

‘Konrad’ [103](#)

‘Krüger’ [95](#)

‘Lenz’ [148](#), [151](#), [160](#)

‘Leo’ [110](#)

‘Lerche’ [151](#)

‘Litze’ [200](#)

‘London’, Operation [230](#)

‘Lore’ [102](#)

‘Marbach’ [98](#)

‘Marcella’ [98](#)

‘Max’ [97](#), [111](#)

‘Merten’ [93](#), [151](#)

‘Mike’ [103](#)

‘Milli’ [96](#)

‘Murat’ [213](#)

‘Natur’ [193](#)

‘Nelly’ [148](#), [151](#)

‘Nielsson’ [156](#)

‘Nixe’ [158](#)

‘Nord’ [158](#)

‘Olaf’ [97](#), [111](#)

‘Ole’ [158](#)

‘Optik’ [60](#), [62](#)

‘Otto’ [196](#)

‘Peter’ [152](#), [157](#)

‘Petermann’ [192](#)

‘Petra’ [98](#)

‘Pfeiffer’ [198](#)

‘Pfeil’ [103](#)

‘Pfeil’, Operation [26](#), [33](#), [35](#)

‘Poet’ [98](#)

‘Protokoll’ [192](#)

‘Rabe’ [93](#)

‘Rainer Matthes’ [156](#)

‘Ramona’ [194](#)

‘Rat’ [109](#)

‘Reinhard’ [93](#)

‘Reise’ [199](#)

‘Richard’ [92](#)

‘Robert’ [93](#)

‘Rode’ [195](#)

‘Roedel’ [150](#)

‘Rohde’ [93](#)

‘Roland Schulz’ [158](#)

‘Romeos’ [194](#)

‘Ronny’ [60](#)

‘Rosenholz’, Operation [5](#), [9](#), [70–2](#), [74](#), [76–84](#), [91](#), [117](#), [136](#), [148](#), [151–2](#), [158–9](#), [185](#), [189–91](#), [195](#), [197–8](#), [201](#)

‘Schulze’ [192](#), [196](#)

‘Schwarz’ [36](#)

‘Schwerdtfeger’ [97](#)

‘Sekretär’ [104](#)

‘Siegel’ [103](#)

‘Soldat’ [99](#)

‘Solist’ [152](#)

‘Sommer’ [103](#)

‘Sputnik’ [98](#)

‘Stamm’ [104](#)

‘Stefan Bauer’ [155](#), [161](#)

‘Steiger’ [96](#), [98](#)

‘Stein’ [195](#)

‘Steinweg’ [99](#)

‘Swan’ [79](#)

‘Test’ [191](#), [193](#)

‘Teutonenschwert’, Operation [120](#)

‘Thielemann, Alfred’ [57](#)

‘Thor’ [151](#), [158](#)

‘Tokio’ [92](#)

‘Topas’ [72](#), [78](#), [79](#), [150](#), [190](#)

‘Töpfer’ [95](#)

‘Tophat’ [214](#)

‘Tusch’ [96](#), [110](#)

‘Venona’, Operation [12](#), [13](#), [14](#), [189](#)

‘Vera’ [95](#)

‘Veran’ [158](#)

‘Walldörfer’ [155](#)

‘Walter’ [100](#)

‘Waltraud’ [100](#)

‘Weber’ [94](#), [95](#)

‘Wedge’, Operation [142](#)

‘Wein’ [98](#)

‘Weißkopf’ [199](#)

‘Wespennest’, Operation [28](#)

‘William’ [100](#)

‘Wolfgang’ [109](#)

‘Wolfgang Schmidt’ [149](#)

‘Zelter’ [191](#), [193](#)

Table 13.1 Number of BND reports on the Air Signl Corps barracks in Bernau, 1962–1973

<i>Year</i>	<i>Reports</i>
1962	95
1963	44
1964	49
1965	4
1966	1
1967	0
1968	3
1969	4
1970	8
1971	17
1972	7
1973	4



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